CHIARA FORMICHI | MICHAEL FEENER (EDS)

SHI'ISM IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

'Alid Piety and Sectarian Constructions

NUS

National University
of Singapore

SHI'ISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

CHIARA FORMICHI
R. MICHAEL FEENER
(*Editors*)

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Our hope is that this volume can serve to re-open a scholarly discussion on manifestations of religious experiences centred on the Prophet Muḥammad and his family, moving beyond both sectarian and academic polemics to facilitate more nuanced explorations of the complex histories and diverse cultural expressions of internal Muslim pluralism in Southeast Asia.

Chiara Formichi, Ithaca
R. Michael Feener, Singapore

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Contributions to this volume discuss materials drawn from a wide range of Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian languages. This, of course, poses considerable challenges to uniformity in transliteration, as well as to ensuring consistent recognition of Islamic figures and terms. One major concern for us in editing this volume has been to attempt to strike a balance between presenting proper names and technical terms in forms recognisable to scholars of Islamic Studies in general, while also avoiding any 'hyper-Arabisation' of distinctly local forms.

Based on this logic, technical terms and names of people known broadly across the Islamic tradition have retained the full diacritics of their Arabic forms (e.g. *ʿaqīda*, Fāṭima), unless usage reflects particular local usages and understandings. Titles of works written in Southeast Asian languages are, moreover, presented without diacritics (e.g. *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami*). Names of figures working in languages (such as Bahasa Indonesia) that conventionally use the roman script have retained their original spelling without diacritics (e.g. Jalaluddin Rakhmat). Names of authors who are widely published in English also appear in their standard Romanised form (e.g. Fazlur Rahman).

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PART 1

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

1

DEBATING 'SHIʿISM' IN THE HISTORY OF MUSLIM SOUTHEAST ASIA

R. Michael Feener and Chiara Formichi

Today the vast majority of Muslims in Southeast Asia identify themselves as 'Sunnī', and this appears to have been the case for most of the region's recorded history. Nevertheless, academic discussions of the 'Islamisation' of the Indonesian archipelago have for more than a century used terms like 'Shiʿitic elements', 'crypto-Shiʿism' and even 'potpourri Syiʿah',[1] in reference to the prominence of figures like ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, Fāṭima and their son Ḥusayn in local Muslim tradition, as well as to religious practices that did not fit in the frame of mainstream Sunnism as understood in the modern period. The aim of this volume is to develop a more nuanced assessment and analysis of elements of ʿAlid piety in the history of Muslim Southeast Asia.

ʿAlid piety

The idea of ʿAlid piety allows for a reframing of our views on the widespread reverence for ʿAlī, Fāṭima and their progeny that emphasises how such sentiments and associated practices are seen as part of broad traditions shared by many Muslims, which might or might not have their origins in a specifically Shiʿī cultural identity.[2] In doing so, it facilitates the movement of academic

discussions out from under the shadow of polemical discourses on 'Shiʿism' in Southeast Asia. The tendency of such debates to be politicised around modern conceptions of 'pure' Islam as both Sunnī and Arab has severely hampered earlier attempts to understand the importance of the Prophet's family (Ar. *ahl al-bayt*) as they appear in diverse religious, literary and cultural expressions of Islam.

The forms that this has taken have varied widely across Muslim communities in history and are, according to Marshall Hodgson, a reflection of major dynamics of the early formation of Islam. Hodgson has argued that ʿAlid loyalism developed along two lines: one which focused on giving to ʿAlī and some of his descendants 'an exclusive role in special religious systems', thus evolving as Shiʿism in its various forms; the other one channelling a broader reverence toward the *ahl al-bayt* 'to color in manifold ways the life of Sunni Islam'.[3] Studies of several very different areas of the Muslim world have since remarked on the prevalence of aspects of ʿAlid piety among Sunnī communities. For example, Valerie Hoffman-Ladd has argued that the 'love for the *ahl al-bayt*' and the viewing of the mystical 'Light of Muḥammad' (Ar. *nūr Muḥammad*) as a source of gnosis are both so central in the context of Egyptian Sufism that the basis on which Sufi and Shiʿī piety are distinguished should be reconsidered.[4]

Moving further east, Muhammad Qasim Zaman has argued that a similar complexity of religious practices had characterised parts of South Asia, but that stricter forms of distinction between Sunnī and Shiʿī emerged in the modern period, driven by the reformist agendas of Deoband and other new organisations that advocated a return to 'original' Sunnism purged of local forms of religious practices, generally defined as cultural Shiʿism.[5] Similar processes have also been at work in Southeast Asia, where stricter conceptions of internal Muslim sectarian differentiation appear to have become increasingly significant since the nineteenth century. The situation there and elsewhere was further transformed in the wake of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. These particular recent reconfigurations of Shiʿism are the focus of the last three chapters of this volume.

ʿAlids and Islamisation

Long before this, however, aspects of Islamic belief and practice expressing special reverence for the *ahl al-bayt* were widespread across Southeast Asia. When the earlier history of Islam in the region emerged as a subject of discussion among European scholars and colonial officials in the nineteenth century,

aspects of ʿAlid piety attracted particular attention. In 1811, Marsden wrote of the Muslim populations of Sumatra that he was unable to ascertain with any certainty 'whether they are followers of the *sunni* or the *shiah* sect, although from their tolerant principles and frequent passages in their writings in praise of ʿAlī, I conclude them to be the latter.'[6] It would seem apparent from this that none of his informants made a point of stressing any form of sectarian identification. While later outside observers gradually became more convinced of the Sunnī orientation of the majority Muslim populations of Southeast Asia, the impression that 'Shiʿism' was important at some earlier stage of Islamisation, and that it persisted in certain areas, remained a constant source of comment.[7] The elements of Shiʿism most discussed in such contexts were, however, generally related to aspects of local literary traditions and ritual as well as devotion to the *ahl al-bayt*, rather than to Shiʿī theological doctrine or jurisprudence.

As modern discussions of the Islamisation of Southeast Asia took on a more formal academic tone, archaeology and epigraphy emerged as crucial tools in attempts to reconstruct the history of Islam in Southeast Asia.[8] Over the past century, heated debates over the interpretation of a rather small sample of materials have generated broad claims about the nature of Islamisation. Based on early epigraphic research,[9] and on a Cham legend according to which the first King of the Chams and his subjects 'were later converted to Islam by *Patenta* (= *Baginda*, prince) Ali, the father-in-law [*sic*] of Muhammad', S. Q. Fatimi constructed an extensive interpretation of the 'Champa stones' in support of an argument emphasising the role of Shiʿī Muslims in bringing Islam to Southeast Asia in the eleventh century.[10] A more recent study of these very same materials by Ludvik Kalus has, however, seriously called into question the position of these inscriptions as reliable sources for the early history of Islam in Southeast Asia.[11]

However, working together with Claude Guillot, Kalus has also called attention to other epigraphic sources for the early history of Islamisation that are indeed relevant to the study of ʿAlid piety in Muslim Southeast Asia. For example, the 1549 Arabic foundation inscription of the mosque of Kudus in Central Java records that the founder of the mosque had taken on the name of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d.765).[12] This particular name is, of course, that of a major figure of Islamic history—important both as the sixth Shiʿī imām and as a major link in most Sunnī chains of Sufi legitimation (*silsila*) as well. The significance of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq as a figure of religious authority for both Shiʿīs and Sunnīs points to the complexities involved in understanding how phenomena

labelled by modern scholars as 'Shiʿī' might have carried other meanings for Muslims living in earlier historical contexts. Indeed, at the time of the Kudus mosque inscription, various parts of the Muslim world were undergoing significant fluctuations in their formal identification with specifically 'Sunnī' or Shiʿī forms of Islam—both of which have a rich heritage of expression in Persian, as well as Arabic.

'Persia' and 'Shiʿism'

Persians had been a presence in Southeast Asia's maritime trade networks since at least the dawn of Islamic history. It should be remembered, however, that these earliest Persians in the Indonesian archipelago were not even Muslims. The presence of Persian Eastern Christians was documented as early as 650, and Persian ships were said to be travelling between Lanka and Srivijaya in the 710s. Archaeological finds appear to record the presence of Muslim 'Persians' on the west coast of Thailand (Kakhao Island) in the ninth and tenth centuries, as well as on the east and west coasts of the Malaysian Peninsula in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[13] Despite this evidence of contact between Persia and Southeast Asia in the second half of the first millennium, Colless suggests that these Persian merchants and mariners were not actively involved in spreading Islam among the local population of the region.

Physical evidence of the influence of distinctively Persianate forms of Islam in Southeast Asia that date from a somewhat later period can be traced back to the early fifteenth century. In their survey of funerary monuments from fifteenth-century Pasai (on the north coast of Aceh), Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus have listed three steles ornamented with inscriptions in Persian, one of which also makes direct reference to the *ahl al-bayt*.[14] Another of them, dated to 1420 and marking the resting place of one Nāʾinā Ḥusām al-Dīn is also embellished with a Persian inscription. However, this is a verse by Muṣliḥ Saʿdi (d.1292),[15] who claimed to have studied at the Niẓāmiyya *madrasa* in Baghdad—a bulwark of Sunnism in Iraq[16]—and whose work has been characterised as having a 'Ṣūfī tinge'.[17]

This Persian-inscribed stone found in a Sumatran cemetery appears to come from Gujarāt.[18] This can be seen as a reflection of a broader pattern of cultural transmission over the fourteenth through to the mid-seventeenth centuries, when Gujarati ships were used as means for Persian ideas and 'Persianised' South Asian forms of Islam to penetrate the Indo-Malay region.[19] By the sixteenth century, the Persian and Gujarati contributions to Islamic culture in

Fig. 1.1: Gravestone of Nāʾinā Ḥusām al-Dīn (d.1420) embellished with a Persian inscription of verses from Saʿdi at Lhokseumawe, North Aceh (photo by R. Michael Feener)

Southeast Asia were obvious to outside observers including the Portuguese historian João De Barros.[20] From the sixteenth century Persianate Asia was strongly oriented towards *ahl al-bayt* devotion although it was to remain doctrinally Sunnī until the Ṣafavid turnover.[21] There appears to have been an increasing level of Persianate influence on the development of Muslim cultural traditions in Southeast Asia. The paucity of surviving manuscript material from that time, however, poses considerable problems for scholars attempting to understand the nature and extent of this 'influence'. One field in which the influence of Persianate Islamic culture has been traced by some scholars is that of literature. Vladimir Braginsky, for example, has characterised the influence of Persian literature on the more general development of Muslim textual tradi-

tions in Malay as 'very strong'—although the actual number of identifiable Persian verses translated directly into Malay that he has been able to identify is quite small.[22]

On 'de-Shiʿitisation'

The best-known example of a Persian Shiʿī text adapted into Malay, and then into other Southeast Asian languages, is the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* (HMH).[23] According to L. F. Brakel, this Malay text was adapted from a court romance written in the Persianised Shiʿa state of Sabzavar (Khorasan) in the mid-fourteenth century, and that it was most probably translated into Malay soon after that 'against the background of a culture satiated with Persian and Shiʿī elements'.[24] He characterises the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* as a 'Shiʿa text of the more extreme kind', being based on a *maqtal*—a martyrdom narrative, a technical term which was apparently introduced to Malay through this very same text. Brakel argues that it is a relic of an earlier phase of Southeast Asian Muslim history in which Shiʿī influences 'must have played a definite (and most likely quite considerable) part in the moulding of early Indonesian Islam'. Along these lines he remarked that a 'correspondence, seem[ed] to exist between the descending age of the respective versions and MSS and the weakening of the Shiʿa character of the text', and thence posited that 'Islam in Indonesia supposedly developed in a more orthodox direction as time went by'.[25]

Citing the work of Brakel (among others), Edwin Wieringa has further advanced the idea of 'de-Shiʿitisation' in which later developments of Islamisation in the Indonesian archipelago 'gradually purged… elements of Perso-Indian origin' to the point that 'Shiʿitic traces in Indonesian Islam are generally not recognised as such by the common (Sunni) believer'.[26] This model of 'de-Shiʿitisation' has gone generally unchallenged in subsequent work on the history of Islam in Southeast Asia. There are, however, other possible explanations for the place of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* (HMH) within the historical development of Muslim vernacular textual traditions in the region. Indeed, Brakel himself, commenting on the unique character of the earliest versions of the text, noted that 'the possibility is not to be excluded that prior to the reception of the HMH a Sunnite regime already prevailed in Indonesia and that our text constitutes a Shiʿa reaction against such dominance'.[27] Recognising our lack of evidence for any other identifiable manifestations of distinctly Shiʿa forms of Islam for the early

period of its history in Southeast Asia, we would argue that one could also regard the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* as a strikingly emphatic, however rare, expression of religious ideals whose expressedly Shiʿī characteristics were gradually absorbed within broader developments in Malay Muslim literature. The fact that perceived 'Shiʿitic' elements nonetheless survived transmission through repeated manuscript copies into the nineteenth century seems in fact to suggest two further considerations: firstly, that if there was any Sunnī revisionist 'purge' of Southeast Asian Muslim literatures, this was not pursued in a comprehensive or totalising manner. Secondly, it indicates that elements of *ahl al-bayt* devotion were incorporated in a doctrinally Sunnī body of literature. As will be demonstrated further, the development of diverse genres of texts centred on the figures of ʿAlī and Fāṭima in Malay and other Southeast Asian Muslim vernaculars gives evidence of a high degree of variation in the ways in which these figures have been integrated into broader cultural traditions of the region.

The text of the early *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* could thus be re-situated in relation to a broader range of materials transmitted to the region in Persian, as well as from other streams of Islamic influence. As mentioned above, funerary monuments from Pasai—the only Southeast Asian sultanate for which we have any significant body of surviving material from the period that Brakel posits for the text—does appear to have had some influence from Persianate forms of Islamic culture, including forms of devotion directed toward the *ahl al-bayt*. However, the three surviving Persian inscriptions do not contain any material that can be indisputably labelled as Shiʿī in the strict sense of the term. Moreover, this small amount of Persian material is surrounded by an overwhelming amount of Arabic-language inscriptions.[28] Regardless, it is clear that neither Arabic nor Persian can be identified exclusively with either Shiʿī or Sunnī forms of Islam, as both languages functioned as media for the broad circulation of Islam around the Indian Ocean region at the time of the Pasai kingdom.[29] Persian was then by no means the language of Iran alone, and indeed even Iran itself was not conceived of as being essentially 'Shiʿī' at that time. Persian Islamic texts were being produced in various parts of Central and South Asia, and they were also often translated back and forth between both Arabic and other emerging regional Muslim vernaculars.[30] The portion of distinctly Shiʿī texts within this vast ocean of work is in fact remarkably small when compared to the large bodies of narrative, poetical and other works appealing to broader Sufi/Sunnī readerships.

Although *ahl al-bayt* devotion had been common ritual practice for centuries in Central Asia, closer identification of the Persian language with Shiʿī

doctrine developed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the establishment of a number of Shiʿī-dominated polities facilitated the flourishing of both Shiʿī religious expression and Persianate literary culture. Among them was the Quṭb-Shāhī dynasty (1518–1687) at Golconda, which shared commercial and cultural relations with Aceh in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[31] The most powerful of these new Shiʿī powers was, however, the Ṣafavid dynasty (1501–1736) which transformed Iran by vigorously promoting 'Twelver' Shiʿism not only among the elite, but to the masses of the majority Sunnī population as well. During the seventeenth century the Ṣafavid dynasty reached the peak of its power in the military, economic and cultural spheres and was on its way toward developing what Kathryn Babayan terms the consolidation of an 'Irano-Semitic and Imāmīte synthesis'.[32] These transformations of Shiʿism in relation to strengthening state structures in Iran had wide repercussions for the way in which both were viewed beyond the borders of the Ṣafavid realm into South and Southeast Asia. In her contribution to this volume, Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti presents an overview of the diverse ways that ʿAlid authority was configured in the religious and political dynamics of the broader Muslim world during this period, providing an important dimension of contextualisation for the more specifically Southeast Asian developments discussed in the other chapters of this book.

In at least one part of Southeast Asia, these developments seem to have stimulated the establishment of one distinctly Shiʿī Persian Muslim community. Christoph Marcinkowski's contribution focuses on the impact of Shiʿī Islam in Southeast Asia, with particular attention devoted to the presence of Persian Shiʿī Muslims at Ayutthaya. The Siamese court was extremely well-connected to Persian Muslim networks spanning the Indian Ocean from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries,[33] and aside from Ayutthaya, no other Southeast Asian society presents such a well-documented example of the establishment of a Shiʿī community in this period. The further integration of ʿAlid elements into the religious and cultural traditions of the region, however, continued apace through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as attested by developments in a number of Muslim vernacular literatures across the archipelago.

ʿ*Alī and Fāṭima*

One of the most striking aspects in the development of literatures centred on the *ahl al-bayt* in Southeast Asian Muslim vernaculars has been the presence

of ʿAlī and Fāṭima in manuscripts written in Southeast Asian languages. In these literatures, members of the *ahl al-bayt* have been portrayed and their images deployed in diverse ways, and a number of contributions to this volume focus on examples from these still under-explored literary traditions. Ronit Ricci's contribution examines the presence of ʿAlī in a number of Javanese texts written (or copied) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, focusing on his role as the brave warrior and as the exemplary disciple of Muḥammad. Mulaika Hijjas' chapter focuses on the figure of Fāṭima in nineteenth-century Malay didactic texts, in which the daughter of the Prophet emerges as a devoted wife but also as an intercessor on behalf of female sinners. Wendy Mukherjee's essay in this volume introduces other texts on Fāṭima in the Sundanese and Acehnese languages, where the daughter of the Prophet is depicted as a bashful bride and faithful wife, respectively.

Beyond these perhaps more familiar images of ʿAlī and Fāṭima, however, are other depictions that may appear surprising to readers unfamiliar with the broader range of literary depictions of this couple in Southeast Asian Muslim vernaculars: that of ʿAlī and Fāṭima as the main characters in manuals of the sexual arts. We have evidence of such traditions from many different parts of the Indonesian archipelago, from Javanese *primbon* to the traditional ritual formulæ employed by the Embau of western Kalimantan (Borneo).[34] The chapters by Teren Sevea and Faried Saenong published here present explorations of such texts in Malay and Bugis respectively and present striking examples of the way in which the figures of ʿAlī and Fāṭima were deployed in these traditions.

Mukherjee has remarked that in Javanese *Nabi Wadon*, the figure of Fāṭima is used to represent 'the essence of femininity which all women share'.[35] Vladimir Braginsky has discussed texts in which ʿAlī and Fāṭima figure as a model couple in terms of a 'Sufi-Tantric synthesis' that he argues was developed in Bengal and transferred thence to Aceh from the sixteenth century onwards.[36] In this system the various 'stations' (*makam*) of the Sufi path were mapped onto the framework of the Hindu *cakra* system, following the 'order' established by Muḥammad in the 'arts of union' and arranged along a progression of points named after famous women of the Prophet's household.[37] Within one major exemplar of this tradition, written in Malay at Aceh, ʿAlī and Fāṭima are situated at the fifth station (*makam*), marking the *barzakh* transcended in reaching the first stage of self-effacement.[38] The ʿAlid elements in the texts analysed here by Mukherjee thus appear to be clearly rooted in currents of ʿAlid devotionalism that were known elsewhere in the Muslim world at the time.

Diverse lines of ʿAlid transmission

Concurrent with the development of this literature in the eighteenth century was another phenomenon that was to have further significant impact upon understandings of ʿAlid piety in the region. From that time we begin to see a marked increase in the number of Ḥaḍramī Arabs settling in ports all across the Indo-Malay archipelago. These migrants followed the trading routes across the Indian Ocean from southern Arabia to Southeast Asia, often passing through the various parts of India on the way. Many of them were members of the Bā ʿAlawī clan, descendants of Aḥmad b. ʿIsā al-Muhājir (d.956), himself a descendant of the Prophet through Fāṭima's and ʿAlī's son Ḥusayn. Bolstered by this prestigious genealogy, many of the Bā ʿAlawī migrants carried the honorific titles of *sayyid* and *habib*, and enjoyed privileged positions in the Southeast Asian Muslim societies where they settled.[39]

As ʿAlids with a strong tradition of affiliation with Sunnī Islam manifested in both Sufism and adherence to the Shāfiʿī *madhhab*, the Bā ʿAlawi have been involved in the birth pangs of new Shiʿī communities in modern Indonesia.[40] At the turn of the twentieth century, Abū Bakr b. Shihāb al-Dīn, Muḥammad b. ʿAqīl al-ʿAlawī and Ibn ʿUbayd Allah al-Saqqāf were engaged in early debates over Shiʿī ritual practices including the cursing of Muʿāwiya as an opponent to the rule of the *ahl al-bayt*.[41] Ismail Alatas' contribution to this volume explores the evolving role of the Bā ʿAlawī *habib*s over the past century as both devotees and descendants of the *ahl al-bayt*. Dan Birchok's chapter examines another group laying claim to the title of *habib*—that of the *habib* Seunagan in Aceh, who trace their own lineage along two parallel lines through the great Sufi master of Baghdad, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlanī (d.1166), as well as through the Javanese *walī* Sunan Kalijaga (d.1550) via ʿAlī's eldest son Ḥasan.

Still other lineages were behind the formations of traditions of ʿAlid piety in diverse areas across the region. In West Java, iconographic traditions for representing ʿAlī have long historical roots. For example, an often reproduced batik flag there, referred to by some as the standard of the sixteenth-century saint Sunan Gunung Jati, prominently features a stylised 'lion' (whose body is composed of lines of Arabic calligraphy) as well as the depiction of *Dhū'l-Fiqār*, the double-bladed sword that the Prophet is believed to have bequeathed to ʿAlī. Similar depictions of this legendary weapon appear as well-established motifs on batik cloth produced in many parts of Sumatra, such as that featured on the cover of this volume. A heavy iron replica of *Dhū'l-Fiqār* is to this day held like a staff by the preacher during Friday sermons at the Kasunyatan mosque in Banten.

Fig. 1.2: The iron replica of Dhūʾl-Fiqār at the Kesunyatan mosque in Banten, West Java (photo by R. Michael Feener)

Colonial observers in several other areas of Southeast Asia first reported elaborate commemorations of the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Ḥusayn (*ʿĀshūrāʾ*) in the mid-nineteenth century. These practices had been introduced by the South Asian Muslims who arrived in Southeast Asia under the new structures of colonial migration policies. As these Muslims and their descendants became more integrated into local communities, their transferred traditions became established within the cultural life of the region.[42] Jan van der Putten's contribution to this volume analyses the transformation of Boria performances in Penang from devotional observance of *ʿĀshūrāʾ* to theatric expressions over the course of the nineteenth century, while Michael Feener's

chapter examines the complex historical trajectory of Muḥarram observances in the Sumatran town of Bengkulu.

Recent transformations

Over the past four decades, a trend has emerged directing Shiʿa-oriented communities toward redefining their paradigms according to foreign models, particularly that of the Iranian Revolution. The absorption of modern Shiʿī views by Southeast Asian Muslims stimulated by this watershed event initiated a process of re-defining ʿAlid piety in terms of more explicitly Shiʿī doctrine. Edwin Wieringa's contribution to this volume calls attention to a remarkable manifestation of contemporary trends toward the expression of more identifiably Shiʿī religious ideals: Faisal Tehrani's Malay-language play entitled *Karbala*. The fact of this work being produced in Malaysia is all the more striking due to the legal and religious restrictions on the propagation of Shiʿism there. Across the Straits in Indonesia, the dissemination of Shiʿī religious writings and the establishment of Shiʿī institutions have gone much further in recent years.

In his analysis of the formation of new Shiʿa communities in contemporary Indonesia, Zulkifli has emphasised the impact of the Iranian Revolution as the main driving force behind the conversion of university students and other segments of society.[43] Because of the perceived threat of the revolutionary political message, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs and Sunnī clerics from the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia/MUI) and other organisations rallied against local Shiʿīs in the early 1980s.[44] Although the impact of the Islamic Revolution on the expansion of Shiʿism outside Iran is undeniable, as far as Indonesia is concerned it seems more apt to look at the impact of the spread of Shiʿī philosophy and mysticism beyond simple political ideology. This approach is embraced here by the authors of the last two chapters in this volume. Umar Assegaf's chapter discusses Indonesia's engagement with Shiʿī Islam over the past thirty years, seeking to understand the contexts for the formation and organisation of the Indonesian Shiʿa community in the post-Suharto era, with a focus on the ways in which it has sought social recognition, and its struggle to achieve unity. Chiara Formichi's chapter further addresses the issue of intra-group tensions by focusing on the of Shiʿī groups in contemporary Indonesia, highlighting their varied sources of inspiration beyond the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Over the decades that followed, this event served as a catalyst for the further spread of several strands

of Iranian religious and social thought in the archipelago. More recently, however, Indonesian religious authorities have given voice in new ways to discourses on 'Shiʿism' as both a 'deviation' from 'the right path' and a pernicious foreign influence on the Indonesian *umma*.

In this rise of new polemics of sectarianism there has been a transformation of the major dynamics of expressions of ʿAlid piety in Muslim Southeast Asia. With the notable exception of Siam's politically well-placed Shiʿī Muslim minority, there are no clearly documented examples of the establishment of distinctly Shiʿa communities in the region's earlier history. It is possible, however, to trace diverse lines of devotionalism to the *ahl al-bayt* in terms of broader, non-sectarian traditions of ʿAlid piety across the long-term Islamisation of the region. Evidence of Persianate religious and cultural influence in Southeast Asia are even more widespread, but in the overwhelming majority of such cases the ideas and practices transmitted to the region are elements of poetry, philosophy and Sufism, rather than Shiʿī doctrine. Beyond this, a significant corpus of texts centred on the figures of ʿAlī and Fāṭima is hard if not impossible to identify as Shiʿī in any sectarian sense. Similarly, shared traditions of ritual observance focused on the *ahl al-bayt* also challenge conventional dichotomies of Sunnī versus Shiʿa.[45] The picture that emerges from the studies collected in this volume is thus one of broad and diverse manifestations of reverence for the *ahl al-bayt* that go well beyond doctrinal definitions of Shiʿism, and viewing these phenomena in terms of a broader rubric of ʿAlid piety can be helpful in avoiding overly-charged modern polemics in favour of developing more nuanced understandings of the early history of Islam and contemporary transformations of Muslim communities in Southeast Asia.

2

SHIʿA DEVOTION TO THE *AHL AL-BAYT* IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti

This chapter examines the historical role of ʿAlid piety in the development of patterns of religious devotionalism in the Muslim world, with particular reference to pilgrimages to the tombs of the *ahl al-bayt*, and ʿĀshūrāʾ commemorations. From their origins within specifically Shiʿī traditions, these two widespread phenomena have come to play an important role in the religious lives of many Sunnī Muslims as well. The focus here will be predominantly on Iraq where Shiʿism had its roots, as well as Iran (in this chapter Iran and Persia will be used interchangeably, depending on the historico-geographic context). In Iran, the Ṣafavid ascension to power in the sixteenth century was a watershed event, and one that had impacts on the development of Islam in the early modern period extending well beyond Persia. Examining the transformations of Muslim devotees' approaches to ʿAlid piety in connection with the Ṣafavid expansion towards the Indian subcontinent, and the consequent spread of Shiʿī practices and beliefs further east due to the influence of traders and travellers, this chapter provides historical context for understanding the formation of traditions of ʿAlid piety in Southeast Asian Islam.

Introducing the ʿAlids

The conceptual focus of this volume on ʿAlid piety presumes a phenomenon that can have multiple manifestations across regional contexts. This chapter will establish the longer historical trajectories of evolving patterns of Ḥasanī and Ḥusaynī ʿAlid devotionalism as central elements in the formation of Shiʿism, and its relation to Sunnī attitudes toward the *ahl al-bayt*.[1] Systematic research on the subject is still lacking despite the widespread acknowledgement of the fact that the ʿAlid diaspora is unique in its nature and forms. It began with ʿAlī's caliphate (656–661) and continued to expand in new ways over the centuries that followed. Hundreds of works in Arabic and other Islamic languages are dedicated to the ʿAlids, yet we lack satisfactory analytical studies.[2] The lack of interest in the Shiʿa of Southeast Asia, until very recently, has been by no means unique.[3] In addressing these lacunae in existing scholarship, one potentially valuable source of information is prosopographic literature written by ʿAlid *nassāba* (genealogists).[4] These texts were and still are spread among Shiʿīs, and in particular among ʿAlid religous scholars.[5] Even within established forms of the genre that the *nassāb* must follow, every author has her or his own criteria in choosing and organising the available information, and we are still far from understanding the rationale by which a *nassāb* selects certain elements and not others.

Local histories can help in this endeavour, especially in cases in which the obituaries list the names of particular ʿAlids. However, the ʿAlid presence is at times also neglected if, with the benefit of the historians' hindsight, we have good reasons to assume that at a given point in time, the place discussed could have been a plausible destination for some members of the Family, or could indicate a stage in their migration.[6] While at present it is still impossible to propose a comprehensive mapping of these developments across the Muslim world, this chapter will present a working outline of the historical diffusion of patterns of Alid piety.[7]

A few preliminary words are necessary on the two aspects of 'devotion' that will be the focus of discussion over the pages that follow. The first is *ziyāra*, the ritual visitation of the tombs of holy persons of ʿAlid lineage.[8] The second relates to the devotionalism centred on the descendants of ʿAlī who are believed to embody an inherent purity (*ṭahāra*) and sacrality.[9] One notable manifestation of this is the ʿAlid's traditional privilege of having the right to be ruled and judged only by one of their own (*niqābat al-ashrāf*, lit. 'the corporation of the Nobles').[10] Another is the widespread reproof of ʿAlid persecutions pursued by various ruling powers, beginning with the general disapproval

for Ḥusayn's martyrdom.[11] Conversely, this has an impact on the construction of other entitlements as well, from the use of the titles (*laqab*) *sharīf* and/or *sayyid*, and other claims to economic and political privileges. In this respect, if the difference between the Shiʿī and Sunnī milieu is, at least in theory, minimal, its contextualisation in historical terms may in fact determine rather different outcomes.[12]

ʿAlid authority: religious and political dimensions

Constructions of ʿAlid piety may also reflect ideological concerns that, in turn, affect the study of related events.[13] For example, the different meanings attributed to the role of ʿAlids in Moroccan history, and in the foundation of Fās in particular, became a sensitive issue under the Berber Zanāta dynasty of the Marinids (592–956/1196–1549). During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, questions arose as to whether the city had been founded by the Ḥasanī Arab Idrīs I b. ʿAbdallāh (r.788–1), or his son Idrīs II b. Idrīs (r.803–28) whose mother was Berber, or by both of them. This latter interpretation becomes possible if we accept that the town was founded in two periods, first in 789 and subsequently in 808–9, by Idrīs I and Idrīs II respectively.[14] According to a common assertion, the Marinids would have been keen on upholding that although Berber, they were equal to or better than the Arabs, being the descendants of both prestigious Arab, and Berber lines—as well as participants in an ''Alid aura' that served to animate the myth of the Idrīses.[15] It was not by chance that during Marinid rule the body of one or maybe both Idrīses was discovered miraculously intact inside the grave.[16] The problem of dating the arrival of Idrīs I in Morocco in terms of before or after Fakhkh's rebellion (786) adds a confessional dimension to the issue of ethnicity, as the possible involvement of Idrīs b. ʿAbdallāh in Shiʿī opposition becomes important if we take into account the strict Mālikī Sunnism of the Marinids.

The time of the imāms

The entry on '*ziyāra*' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* provides both an overview of its history and considers the distinction between Shiʿī and Sunnī contexts.[17] The entry is organised in terms of geography, and focuses particularly on the period after 1800. The performance of *ziyāra* as a significant dimension of ʿAlid piety can, however, be better understood through the adoption of a deeper historical perspective. The periodisation used in this article is framed

in terms of significant religious events affecting the Twelver Shiʿa community: 1) the period of the imāms; 2) the shorter 'occultation' (*ghayba*) of 874–941; 3) the period of Ṣafavid rule; and 4) contemporary times. Tracing developments across these periods demonstrates the ways in which changing meanings have been given to enduring models of devotional practice.

J. W. Meri, who introduces the topic *ziyāra* in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* entry, stresses the distinction between the concept across Shiʿī and Sunnī contexts. In his discussions of Shiʿī pilgrimage guidebooks, he argues that the first treatise on the subject (*Kitāb al-ziyārāt*) is attributed to al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl al-Kūfī (d.224/838–9). That same author was later branded as an extremist (*ghulāt*) by al-Kashshī (d.895), and said to have been a '*faṭūī*' (meaning one of the partisans of ʿAbdallāh b. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq as claimant to the imāmate), before 'coming back' to Abū al-Ḥasan (i.e. ʿAlī al-Riḍā (d.818), in order to be listed among his trustworthy (*thiqa*) transmitters (*rijāl*).[18] Two elements must be emphasised here: first, the title of Ibn Faḍḍāl's book concerns pilgrimages (note the plural form). The practice of the *ziyāra* to Najaf and Karbalā' is well established, and not only among Shiʿīs, as proven by the destruction of Ḥusayn's shrine and the consequent prohibition to visit the place ordered by the caliph al-Mutawakkil (d.861) in 850–51. On the contrary, the universal acceptability of the visit to the graves of the other imāms cannot be taken for granted. In spite of their difficult relationship with the Abbasid authorities, the imāms avoided direct confrontation most of the time.[19] In this perspective, the short political idyll (816–17) between ʿAlī al-Riḍā and al-Maʿmūn (d.833), with the caliph's nomination of al-Riḍā as heir presumptive, is not so exceptional. It is only with the beginning of the permanent state of occultation (*ghayba*), lasting until the advent of the Mahdī, that Shiʿī authors underline how the imām knew to be fated to a burial in Ṭūs, beside Hārūn (d.809)—who had been described as the 'worst of men' because of his anti-Shiʿī policy and his murder of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (d.799).[20]

The veneration for the imāms had very early roots in the tradition, and that association with them was perceived as a spiritual privilege.[21] Within this broad framework, however, the rules of succession were not so fixed as to avoid challenges, as in the case of the mentioned al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl whose first commitments, interestingly enough, were not of the kind that would be considered 'orthodox' from the perspective of later Imāmī tradition. It appears then that both the court and companions of the imāms were as concerned with pragmatic affairs as with doctrinal issues.[22] The process of sacralisation of the imāms was thus a composite historical process, performed in many ways, from

claiming divine attributes to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib during the Prophet's life, to shifting some of the supernatural qualities attributed to Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya to each of the twelve imāms. These diverse elements were eventually incorporated in what would become the Imāmī creed in ways that helped to render ineffective potentially subversive elements of the extremists (*ghuluww*).

In the process of these developments, the inheritance of the Light of Muḥammad (*Nūr Muḥammad*) and the role of the imāms as guarantors (*ḥujja*) become central to Shiʿī doctrine. By the time of Ibn Bābawayh (d.991) this emergent orthodoxy was well consolidated.[23] Ibn Bābawayh's biography of the eighth imām, *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, can be taken as a paradigm of this literature in setting the standards of ritual observance to be performed during the *ziyāra* to the imāms' graves, taking as a topical destination Mashhad, a location outside the Arab lands.[24] The importance that Ibn Bābawayh attributes to the shrine of ʿAlī al-Riḍā indicates that Ḥusayn is a model rather than an exception, each imām being *maẓlūm* ('treated unjustly') and *shahīd* ('martyr'). And it is not unreasonable to speculate that he may have also wished to stress how the eastern regions of the Caliphate were marked by the ʿAlid Shiʿī presence.[25]

After the ghayba: the centuries before the rise of the Ṣafavids

Between 913 and 923, al-Kulaynī (d.939–40) finished his *Kitāb al-kāfī*—a text that offers a 'Summa Theologica' concerning the imāms. In the same period, the Būyid Rukn al-Dawla (d.976) had taken control of a large part of Iran. It can thus plausibly be suggested that during the shorter *ghayba* the Shiʿī elite was engaged both in removing those beliefs that could inspire de facto aggressive behaviour against the ruling power (dangerous and meaningless in the absence of the imām) and emphasising the divine nature of the imāms themselves in order to defer the realisation of the Shiʿī utopia to the end of time.[26] However, the same elite could also have taken advantage of the Zaydī rule in Ṭabaristān (Amul was taken in 914), and in the Caspian regions where the ʿAlid diaspora of the time was favoured.[27]

The beginning of the great *ghayba* in 941 clashed with a series of important political events: the increasing power of the Būyids in Fars (conquered in 934) and their succeeding vizierate at the court of Baghdad (945–1055); ʿAlid rule in Daylam and the influence of the Daylami dynasty in the eastern regions of Iran; and the rise of Fāṭimid power (Fusṭāṭ being conquered in 969). However, things would change with the arrival of the Sunnī Ḥanafī Saljūqs in Iran, and with the spread of contemporary Ismaili *daʿwa* ('proselytism') as pro-

moted by the Fāṭimid caliph-imāms in Egypt, which was particularly successful under al-Mustanṣir (1036–94). The Ismaili state of Alamūt was founded in Daylam in 1090, and provoked, at least in Iran, an elitist solidarity between Sunnīs and Imāmī Shiʿīs, as testified by one of the most important sources on Imāmī Shiʿa in the Saljūq period. ʿAbd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī al-Rāzī's *Kitāb al-naqḍ* (*c*.1160)[28] is a polemical answer to a Sunnī defamatory book, which provides the reader with an idea of 'normality' in the relationship between Imāmī Shiʿīs and the sultans. For example, in responding to the accusation that Imāmī Shiʿīs were 'pagans' because of their 'worship' of the ʿAlids, al-Rāzī replies with a list of places where *ziyārāt* were also practised by Sunnīs.

To return to the question of Shiʿī devotional practices, the increased prominence of the Būyid vizierate in Baghdad did not necessarily help to establish the practice of *ziyārāt* and the observance of '*Āshūrā*' as popular forms of devotionalism—and it appears that such practices remained mostly associated with the elites.[29] Manifestations of Shiʿī devotion in Baghdad are well documented, but these have all been promoted by the Imāmī elite associated with the court, including Shiʿī or pro-ʿAlid figures in the caliphs' entourage, like al-Faḍl b. Sahl and the Barmakids. Similarly, the ʿAlid al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (335–436/967–1044)[30] and his brother al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (359–406/970–1016)[31] were high-profile intellectuals in Baghdad famous for their *marāthī* (lament poems) dedicated to the martyrs of the *ahl al-bayt*.

The Abbasid stance on public manifestations of ʿAlid piety changed often, as on (rare) occasions they forbade the pilgrimage to Karbalā' whilst also understanding the positive political impact of promoting such events. The most striking example is the declaration of 'Āshūrā' as a day of public mourning, promoted by the Būyids in Baghdad in 962.[32]

While the Mongol invasion of 1258 certainly represented a watershed event in Middle Eastern history, the Mongols' own neutrality toward the creed of their subjects was favourable to the Imāmī Shiʿa, as was the destruction of Alamūt in 1256. Both events helped to smooth the transition of Shiʿī elements into Sufi orders and the integration of Shiʿī attitudes into Sufi cults. The end result was that 'devotion' to the *ahl al-bayt* took a strong hold within Sufism, and outstanding ʿAlid figures benefited from multiple sources of prestige stemming from their Prophetic descent, as well as the authority ascribed to Sufi *shaykh*s.[33] It should be noted that such a role has been well documented for the Southeast Asian court of Pasai in Sumatra and its counterparts in Java.[34]

This trend continued during the Timurid period as devotion to the ʿAlids became considerably taken for granted.[35] Tīmūr himself sought his own iden-

tification with the *ahl al-bayt*—although not necessarily with the Shiʿī ʿAlid branches—as we can infer from Ibn ʿInaba's (d.828/1424–5) dedication of his ʿ*Umdat al-ṭālib fī ansāb Al Abī Ṭālib*, which glosses him as the 'just ruler'.[36] Two main aspects are relevant here and will be discussed in the paragraphs that follow: the first is literary, and concerns the lyrical school of Herat; the second is theological and juridical, that is, the role of Shāfiʿīsm in spreading ʿAlid devotionalism.

The Sunnī Timurid Ḥusayn Bāyqarā wrote a *ghazal* in the Herat style, in which ʿAlī al-Riḍā was the *maḥmūd*. It was not only a rhetorical exercise, as the prince desired to show his devotion to the ʿAlids, and in particular to the imāms. In fact, he was among those who had sponsored the construction and maintenance of the putative grave of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib in Mazār-i Sharīf. He had probably done so with a political purpose. Nonetheless, this gesture eliminates doubts of any open hostility towards the Shiʿa. Indeed, other Sunnīs in Herat wrote poems in praise of the eight imāms whose graves at Mashhad were the object of *ziyāra* by both Sunnīs and Shiʿīs during that period.[37]

Along the same lines we have another work that was (until recently) considered to be the first *mathnawī* poem of which ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib is the hero.[38] The *Khāwar-nāma* was finished in 1427 by Muḥammad b. Ḥusām al-Khusfī—a Shiʿī often referred to by his *nom de plume* 'Firdawsī al-Thānī', an intentional way of introducing himself as emulator of Firdawsī.[39] This author lived and worked in Quhistān province, far from Iran's major centres, but he represents a more interesting case of 'Persianisation' usually exemplified by the works of his contemporary Wāʿiẓ Kāshifī (d.1504). Ibn Ḥusām's purpose was the insertion of Shiʿa history in the Persian epic tradition, giving to such history a symbolic dignity similar to the one radiated by the mythical struggle between Iran and 'Turan', a land across the Oxus. Wāʿiẓ Kāshifī's *Rawḍat al-shuhadā*', on the contrary, was conceived as 'a popular translation' of the same history, meant to affect the feelings of the common people.[40] Both authors, in different ways, advocated ʿAlid devotionalism, and it is through such devotion that the Ṣafavids succeeded in bringing about the unification of these two perspectives. As it turns out, however, it was only Kāshifī's text that became more widely known, thus representing the turning point in the history of Shiʿī devotionalism in Iran. Furthermore, Ṣafavid pro-Shiʿī propaganda was not based at first on popular demands, and in fifteenth-century Sunnī Iran the plausibility that Shiʿīs could become the majority in the country was remote. It was Shāfiʿīsm, the second aspect at stake, which arguably played a greater role in the process of Shiʿitisation in Iran, as well as in Southeast Asia.

The Ṣafavids: 'Shiʿitisation' and transformation in the eastern lands of Islam

It is a commonly held opinion that there is no real (or alleged) contradiction between being Shāfiʿī and Imāmī, or at least intensely pro-ʿAlid, as in the case of Shāh Ismāʿīl (r.1502–24) who 'converted' to Imāmism. It should be noted here that in the sources Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d.1220) was considered both as Shāfiʿī and Imāmī; that Ṣafī al-Dīn (d.1334) and his *shaykh*, Zāhid al-Jīlānī (d.1301), were often identified as Shāfiʿī, and that Ardabīl was considered to be a Shāfiʿī town. However, the relationship between Shāfiʿism and Imāmism is a complicated issue, particularly in the history of Iran and in relation to the role of Shāfiʿī *quḍāt* ('judges') in the political arena.[41] I shall only raise the problem here with reference to a specific case from Khunj, a town of Lāristān which, at the time of my visit there in 1973, was still traditionally Shāfiʿī. I found that in one of the inscriptions at the base of the minaret of a ruined mosque built in 789/1387, the 'prayer of God' was invoked first by calling upon the four caliphs, the *rashīdūn*, and then calling upon the twelve imāms, there mentioned with their *laqab*, for example, Ḥusayn *al-Shahīd* and Jaʿfar *al-Ṣādiq*. Are we then looking at a Sufi influence or an already accepted, and probably not unique, form of 'syncretism'?[42] Both hypotheses are plausible.[43] What I think must be taken into account are the following questions: could conversions to Imāmism be more common when and where the local *madhhab* was related to Shāfiʿism? And is this one of the reasons for the Ṣafavid success in Iran and India? No definitive answers are yet possible but the hypothesis seems plausible, at least in these contexts.

The Ṣafavid period has been studied with increasing attention over recent decades.[44] Within much of this work there is an emerging consensus that the popular acceptance of Imāmism was gradual, and that Shiʿī devotion to the cult of the imāms was promoted by the court and the *ʿulamāʾ* who were sponsored by the Shāhs. The apex of a generalised acceptance of the rituals as unavoidable aspects of the good behaviour of an Imāmī *muʿmin* was achieved under the Qajars, when the practice of *taʿziya* during the first ten days of Muḥarram also became a regular custom.[45] In what follows, I shall focus my remarks on the meanings of the Imāmī cult in Iran's modern history and the internalisation of the Shiʿa phenomenon during and after the Ṣafavids.

Upon their ascendancy in Iran, the Ṣafavids attracted extraordinary attention in Europe. Ismāʿīl seemed the ideal ally against the Ottomans, one of the reasons being a supposed similarity between the Christian faith and his 'religion'. Such similarity, at first connected to the messianic role attributed by his

supporters to the young Shāh, was later attributed to the Imāmī Shiʿa on the basis of their devotional practices. The Ṣafavid international reputation assisted the development of a new Persian protagonism, in which the often reviving imperial vocation of Iran participated in the process of mass conversion to Imāmism in the country.[46] We must take into account two issues. The first concerns Iran, and the second Shiʿī visibility outside Iran.

Under the Ṣafavids, Iran was marked as Shiʿī by the spread of Imāmzāda (shrines of the imāms' descendants) all over the country.[47] We can read and interpret this either as the recovery of a forgotten past (presuming that ʿAlid devotion has always been present in the country), or as an 'invented tradition'. Regardless, this process resulted in Iran's religious identity becoming identified with Shiʿism, although there was at least one piece of evidence suggesting that in 1720–21 one third of the population was still Sunnī.[48] As the elite, including the court, shared the same devotional practices, the message that was transmitted was that such practices were a common distinctive feature. If Qum and Mashhad were the emblematic centres of Shiʿī cult, any place could have its shrine. In Rayy, the shrine dedicated to ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm al-Ḥasanī (d.866)—a companion of the last imāms—was restored by the Ṣafavid Ṭahmāsp (r.1525–76), and later further improved by the Qajar Shāh Nāṣir al-Dīn in 1857. At the periphery of the country, the local Imāmzāda was a convincing alternative, the place having also been dignified by the presence of the imāms' descendants. The performance of the ʿĀshūrā' ritual, and later of *taʿziya*, is testified also by European travellers, and the building of Ḥusayniyyāt as places of worship, of which we have no evidence before the Ṣafavids, increased enormously during Qajar rule.

In the process, the assumption that the Shiʿī cult pertained specifically to Iranians took root, and religious identity became the main component of the national, or rather proto-national, Iranian identity. It is impossible to date exactly when such ideas took shape, but it is undeniable that the Ṣafavid rule built its credibility on its religious policy, inside and outside Iran.[49] The Ottoman Empire, including the Jabal al-ʿĀmil in Lebanon (which is whence the Ṣafavids enlisted most of the clerics faithful to their dynasty), were not part of this project and remained peripheral. Things went differently in India and, later on, in Southeast Asia.

The Ṣafavid role is particularly evident in the Deccan. The founder of Hyderabad in around 1590, Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh (d.1612), was a Shiʿī as was the Quṭb-Shāhī dynasty (1512–1687) of Golconda.[50] However, the most striking instances of the Shiʿa presence in India (1722–1856) can be

seen in the Lucknow and Awadh provinces.[51] The fortune of the *nawwāb* rulers in the town and across the region was due to Mīr Muḥammad Amīn Burhān al-Mulk al-Nīshāpūrī (d.1739), of a Najafī ʿAlid family, and a descendant of Mūsā al-Kāẓim, who had migrated to Khurāsān during the reign of Ismāʿīl. The patronage of the Shāhs and the ʿAlid ascendance were, undoubtedly, important to his success. However, it is also worth noting that the imitation of the Ṣafavid model of intertwining politics and religion through patterns of devotional practice was also a factor here. Something similar occurred in Southeast Asia where, according to Christoph Marcinkowski, ʿAlid devotion in Thailand can be seen as reflecting more generally 'Persian' than specific 'Shiʿī' influence.[52] In fact, it is my opinion that, with the setting aside of the territorial and frustrated ambitions of the Shāhs, the imperial vocation of the Ṣafavids was realised with a chronological delay thanks to the export of Shiʿī 'intellectuals', that is, cultivated clerics, after the end of their rule. Such a success helped to return the Shiʿa to the international arena, both religiously and politically.

Reconfigurations of Shiʿī identity in the modern period

The beginning of the contemporary history of the Shiʿa must be considered from both religious and political dimensions. The cradle of Imāmism, Iraq, was once again at the centre of developments. Karbalā' and Najaf never lost their symbolic significance, and a legal scholar (*mujtahid*) could never be taken seriously without having spent at least some time studying in these holy cities. Nevertheless, Iraq's centrality, which was already waning with the decline of the caliphate, was further eclipsed by the Sunnī Ottoman rule in the country on the one hand, and the attraction exerted by Ṣafavid Iran on the other. The *ziyārāt* did not cease to be performed; the processions bringing the mortal remains of pious Shiʿīs to be buried in Karbalā', and especially in Najaf, went on; the alms employed to the benefit of the inhabitants of the two cities continued to be collected amidst the Shiʿī communities or were provided by Shiʿī rulers, as in the case of ʿAwadh's *nawwāb*. However, the fate of the Shiʿa destiny had for a long time been decided outside Iraq. Qajar 'decadence' and what we might call the internationalisation of the Shiʿī elite promoted by the Ṣafavids, however, eventually facilitated the return of Iraq to its former role.

The establishment in Najaf of the institution of the *marjaʿ-i taqlīd* ('source of emulation' on matters of jursiprudence), embodied by one single person, was sanctioned as a new hierarchy among Shiʿī religious scholars. The process

was slow, concluding only at the end of the nineteenth century. The duty of the *marjaʿ-i taqlīd* to the Shiʿa community has important political dimensions. In 1914 the *mujtahid*s in Iraq mobilised the Shiʿī community to undertake resistance against the Allied Forces, and something similar was performed by the Sunnī Ottoman *shaykh al-islām* and the great *muftī*, who promulgated a *fatwa* calling for holy war, *jihād*. For the Shiʿīs, though, resistance meant something different, something which entailed the replay of Ḥusayn's martyrdom and emphasised the duty of the community to bear witness to his struggle. In fact, the Shiʿa carried on their struggle against the British occupation until 1918, when the British army was eventually able to enter Najaf after a siege lasting forty days. In the given context, Shiʿīs considered this a success.[53] Shiʿa leaders were often successful in winning over public opinion because they could be trusted as 'real' leaders—fitting familiar models of clerics with ʿAlid pedigrees.[54]

The path to the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran led by Imām Khomeini was facilitated by a series of events which took place in the Near East at the beginning of the second half of the 20th century. In Iraq, the philosopher Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr (d.1980) theorised Islam, and Shiʿa Islam in particular, as a 'third way' between capitalism and communism (his *Falsafatunā* was published in 1959).[55] In south Lebanon in the 1960s, another member of the same ʿAlid family, Mūsā al-Ṣadr (disappeared 1978), organised the local Shiʿī community politically and socially. He mobilised the poor Shiʿī strata in particular, suggesting to them that the Shiʿīs were to be considered the first Muslims to enter the country, and that they could claim a kind of primacy vis-à-vis the other communities. This is the political and ideological framework in which we can locate the use and meaning of contemporary Shiʿī devotion, which also hints at the role reserved for women.

In interpreting these contemporary developments, it is important to recognise a distinction between Iran on one side and Iraq and Lebanon on the other. In Iran there are longer lines of historical continuity in the observance of Muḥarram and the practice of *ziyārāt*, and not only by the lower classes. The shrines of Qum and Mashhad were never dismissed, and on the contrary the Pahlavi regime promoted the improvement of some buildings; perhaps questionable, but surely impressive. Devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* was used, at least by the last Shāh, as a tool to strengthen national identity. It was a useful tool to the more or less declared antagonism between Iran and Saudi Arabia for the leadership in the Gulf in these modern developments.

The philosophical speculation on Shiʿa identity did not come from the clerics, but rather from intellectuals who had been raised and educated

abroad.[56] The clerics allowed the spreading of their idea that the Shiʿa had lost their true nature. The ideas of the Iranian intellectuals were complementary, not antithetical, to the philosophy of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr. In the end, the Shiʿa revival must be considered a duty by each and every good Shiʿī believer—Shiʿa as the true 'permanent revolution'. The result was the participation en masse in Khomeini's revolution, and quite likely one of the reasons for the anti-regime protests to be still labelled as Shiʿa. The main protagonists of such operations were ʿAlī Sharīʿatī (d.1975) and Khomeini (d.1989);[57] the former through his lectures, and the latter through his growing influence among Shiʿa communities in Najaf. In these contexts, 'Āshūrā' assumed the role of a model as much as of a foundation myth, while Ḥusayn assumed the role of a hero whose apparent passivity is, on the contrary, the revolutionary element of his behaviour. Such a myth is twofold, as besides Ḥusayn, Fāṭima also took on a new significance as a primary symbol of female virtue. She was modest as well as a good and obedient housewife; yet, when necessary, she became active against tyranny.[58] In this way, the mobilisation of women in the revolution was more than justified.

The attraction of this ideology cannot be easily dismissed, since it met the demand of change on the basis of a supposedly fixed identity that needed to be recovered. The uprisings that took place in Iran in 2009 seem once again consistent with such patterns. Once again, rituals were promoted in order to stress Iran's centrality as the paramount Shiʿī country. Traditional devotionalism, based on Muḥarram and 'Āshūrā' rituals, was thus once again updated so as to demonstrate the inner and continuous 'modernity' of Shiʿa Islam.

In that context, to stress (or to invent) the importance of women in Shiʿism was then seen as the right strategic move, especially when the regime began to lose its popularity among women mostly. Aiming to recover their support, it promoted the restoration of the memory of women's active role in Shiʿa history, which again is an example, as in similar cases, of an alleged return to the origins and the true nature of the Shiʿa.[59] The shrine of Fāṭima bint Mūsā al-Kāẓim in Qum had never lost its attraction for women, and *ziyārāt* to shrines of 'Alid female luminaries were also encouraged outside Iran, with Damascus—the ex-capital of the Umayyads, the 'usurpers' of the caliphate—becoming a prominent destination for pilgrims. The shrine of Ḥusayn's sister Zaynab, for example, was restored and its prestige enhanced by the presence of Iranian clerics. The *ziyāra* to Sayyida Zaynab—promoted by the Khomeini regime—became fashionable not only among Iranians. It was so successful that other shrines dedicated to women, not necessarily of *ahl al-bayt* descent, were rediscovered in Syria and in other Shiʿī contexts.[60]

Recent developments in Indonesia can be read along analogous lines. The ambiguity of the reaction to Khomeini's revolution and to the Iranian policy of the last decade, as illustrated by Chiara Formichi in her contribution to this volume, can also be a key to understanding Iran's position on the stage of the Muslim world as a persuasive example of a Shiʿī state.[61] In other words, Iran's experience can be instructive for understanding social and ideological processes as well as political developments. The impact of Khomeini's revolution cannot be denied. However, the global ʿAlid diaspora remains an important protagonist in these developments—reflecting in significant ways older patterns of Shiʿī propagation established by the Ṣafavids, and extending all the way to South and Southeast Asia, as addressed in the remainder of this volume.[62]

3

SHIʿISM IN THAILAND

FROM THE AYUTTHAYA PERIOD TO THE PRESENT

Christoph Marcinkowski

Hamzah Shahr Nawi terlalu hapus,
Seperti kayu sekalian hangus;
Asalnya Laut tiada berharus,
Menjadi kapur didalam Barus.

(*Hamzah of Shahr Nawi is truly effaced,*
Like wood, all burnt to cinders;
His origins is the Ocean without currents,
He became camphor in Barus)

Ḥamza Fanṣūrī[1]

Introduction

Scholars have long debated interpretations of expressions of ʿAlid piety, as well as of 'Shiʿism per se', in the history of Southeast Asia.[2] The course of this Islamisation process, in turn, is also closely linked with the establishment of cultural links not only with the Arab world but also with the Persianate[3] lands of Iran, Muslim India and Central Asia. However, the presentation of a cohesive, comprehensive and chronological account of the Persian cultural presence in

Southeast Asia is difficult, if not impossible, to present due to the diverse and multi-faceted nature of the Southeast Asian Muslim communities.

In the following discussion, I will identify some of the key factors involved in the transmission of elements of ʿAlid piety from the Persianate world—with a focus on Iran and India—to Siam, present-day Thailand. As it will be argued, both the Persian language and Persianate culture played an important part in the spread of ʿAlid piety in the Southeast Asian region. However, we should also be aware that 'Persianate culture' and Shiʿism are not necessarily interchangeable. 'Persianate' Mughal India, for instance, was a Sunnī-dominated state.

The case of India is also very important if we want to understand the coming of Shiʿism or ʿAlid piety to Southeast Asia, and especially, to Siam. By the sixteenth century, there already existed various Twelver Shiʿī kingdoms in the southern parts of the subcontinent, the most prominent among them being the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom, also known as Golconda. Moreover, since times immemorial, India functioned as the stopover place for mariners bound for Southeast Asia, mainly due to the monsoons which determined seafaring conditions in the Indian Ocean region, thus accounting for the influence of the subcontinent's culture.

Persian cultural influences arrived in India with the advent of the first Muslim empires on the subcontinent. From the establishment of the Ghaznavids—a dynasty of Turkic origin, which ruled over much of what is today northern India, Pakistan and Afghanistan—from the tenth century, but especially after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century, Persian, rather than Arabic, served as a means of the dissemination of Islam, and as the *lingua franca* among the educated Muslims of South Asia.[4]

When considering the history of Islam in the eastern Indian Ocean region and the Indonesian archipelago, as well as the place of Shiʿism per se or expressions of ʿAlid piety within this context, the role played by lingua francas will become apparent. In the course of Islamic history, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Malay, not to mention several other *lingua francas* in Africa, had been major tools in communicating the message of Islam to a multi-ethnic and multilingual audience. As we have seen, Persian obtained such a position in Central Asia and on the Indian subcontinent. This particular circumstance cannot not be emphasised enough, as Persian—as is evident in the spread of Sufi literature, for instance—had thus become the transmitter for major aspects of Islamic culture through Iran and Central Asia, India, and further east. The devastating invasions of the Middle East, Iran and Central Asia, and

the subsequent establishment of kingdoms of Mongol and Turkic ethnic and cultural backgrounds, strengthened this trend of a 'distinct' development of Islamic culture east of the Arab world even more. This resulted in the development of local formulations of Islam that found expression in various aspects of popular piety and mysticism.

Persian became a major *lingua franca* in the Indian Ocean trading world, and a Persian-speaking merchant community was present in Malacca, the Malay–Muslim sultanate and trade emporium, which only lasted from the early fifteenth century to 1511, when it was conquered by the Portuguese.[5] Although Malacca was, at least nominally, a vassal of Siam (although this circumstance is usually played down by writers who appear to be influenced by contemporary Malay nationalism) and claimed suzerainty over the entire Malay Peninsula,[6] this sultanate was able to establish itself as the foremost power in the archipelago, giving the propagation of Islam in the region a vigorous new impetus.[7] One example of Persianate influence in Malacca, which has attracted the attention of several Western scholars,[8] was the presence of the office of the *shāhbandar*, a kind of 'harbour master' already known in many of the Indian Ocean trade ports, as well as in several parts of the Ottoman Empire.

Persian cultural influence in India reached its peak between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in the (Sunnī) Mughal Empire and the mostly Shiʿī Deccan kingdoms. It found its most obvious expression in Persian becoming the language of court, society and secular as well as religious literary life, such as poetry, biographies and especially historiography. As a matter of fact, the numerical output of Persian literary works was much higher on the subcontinent than in the Iranian 'homeland'. This was quite remarkable considering that many of the rulers and nobility were actually 'Persianate' Turks from Central Asia, who spoke various Turkic languages as their mother tongues. Muslim Indian society thus featured a distinctive 'Indo-Persian culture' that was constantly enriched by the steady influx of secular and religious scholars, in particular, Sufis, historians, architects, musicians and other exponents of 'high Persianate culture' who fled the Mongol devastation. Over several centuries, Persian scholar–officials immigrated to the subcontinent, where their expertise in Persianate culture and administration secured them positions of high standing at the various Indian Muslim courts. Networks of scholars, administrators and especially merchants were important figures in the spread of Shiʿism to Siam. In many cases, those identified as 'merchants' had been religious scholars as well, and vice versa.

Persianate culture and its link with the spread of Shiʿism in Southeast Asia

In order to understand better the particular connections between Persianate culture and the spread of Twelver Shiʿism to South and Southeast Asia, we need to recall that in 1501 the Ṣafavid dynasty came to power in Iran, establishing Twelver Shiʿism as a quasi 'state religion' in a country which, prior to this event, had been one of the centres of Sunnism. Persianate forms of Islam—whether Sunnī or Shiʿī—often tended to be less legalistic, while featuring strong elements of Sufism. As a matter of fact, the divide between Sunnism and Shiʿism was never that sharp in Iran, and reverence to Muḥammad and the *ahl al-bayt*, through acts of ʿAlid piety, had been strong among Persian-speaking Muslims since the seventh century.

India, too, saw major political changes during the first half of the sixteenth century, one of them being the gradual establishment of the Sunnī Mughals in the northern part of the subcontinent. By the seventeenth century the Mughals had gained full control over Bengal and Orissa, through which they obtained access to the Bay of Bengal. Another formidable Muslim power on the subcontinent, which evolved only slightly earlier than that of the Sunnī Mughals, was the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom (1512–1687) on the Deccan.[9] Like the Ṣafavids, the Quṭb-Shāhī rulers too were ardent Twelver Shiʿīs with strong political links to Iran. As a matter of fact, the dynasty was founded by Persianate Turks.[10] Throughout the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom, the name of the ruling Ṣafavid shāh of Iran was mentioned alongside the names of the Twelve Imāms in the sermon during Friday prayers, which, according to Islamic tradition, amounted to some sort of acknowledgement of a client–ruler relationship on the part of the Quṭb-Shāhīs.

The Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom could be considered 'highly Persianate', with a large number of Persian-speaking merchants, scholars and artisans present at the royal capital, many of them being immigrants from Iran. It was not only a major trading power, but was also to become a haven for Twelver Shiʿīs. However, Shiʿīs from northern India, where they had been at times subjected to persecution under the Sunnī Mughals, were also to be found at Golconda. In his study of the migration of Iranians from Iran to India and Southeast Asia, Sanjay Subrahmanyam has provided abundant evidence for their massive economic, political and literary presence in the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom.[11] Further to the east, the rulers of the Siamese Ayutthaya kingdom encouraged foreign merchants and traders to settle down in their capital, resulting in the presence of a substantial expatriate community there. Ayutthaya's trade links

with the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom were particularly close, with Persian eventually becoming a major lingua franca in the eastern Indian Ocean maritime trade.

Traders from the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom also brought with them to Southeast Asia their particular brand of Islam; Twelver Shiʿism in the garb of 'Persianate' Sufism. Shiʿī influences on Islamic religious thought in Southeast Asia were substantial with regard to the (Sunnī) Aceh sultanate in Sumatra, which gained a dominant position in the Straits as the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511. In the Malay–Indonesian world, this period featured a general flourishing of speculative philosophy and 'Persianate' Sufism based on the thought of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d.1240) in the Indian Ocean region, which had also characterised Sufism in Iran.[12] In Southeast Asia, Ibn al-ʿArabī's idea of the 'unity of Being' (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) was propounded mainly, but not entirely, by the Malay Sufi poet Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī, who flourished in the sixteenth century.[13] Subsequently, Sunnī Aceh also saw the flourishing of Shiʿī and Persian Sufi thought.[14] Besides his native Malay, Fanṣūrī had a knowledge of Arabic and Persian. In some of his works, he quotes—either in Persian or Malay translation—from the masters of classical Persian mysticism, such as Shabistārī's famous poem *Gulshan-i rāz* (The Secret Rose Garden), which is an exposition of Ibn al-ʿArabī's ideas.[15] On the basis of his travels to Mecca, Medina and Iraq, traditional destinations of Shiʿī pilgrimage, and his recurrent affectionate poetic references to the first imām of the Shiʿa, several modern scholars considered it plausible that Fanṣūrī himself was a Shiʿī[16] although this is disputed by others, who, for various reasons, emphasise real or supposed aspects of Sunnism in the life and work of Fanṣūrī.

Based on the above considerations, the coming of the Persianate Shiʿī traders to Southeast Asia—from the sixteenth century—could be interpreted as a sort of 'second wave of Islamisation' of the region, which also involved cultural penetration and the encounter with mysticism.

A Persian name for a Thai city: Ayutthaya—Shahr-i Nāv ('City of Boats')

In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Twelver Shiʿism also had a foothold in the nearby Theravada Buddhist kingdom of Siam, that is, present-day Thailand, where there existed a vibrant community of Shiʿī Persian and Persianate merchants.[17] It is worth noting that some scholars have advanced the possibility that Ḥamza Fanṣūrī was born in the Siamese kingdom's capital, Ayutthaya, although his family background stemmed from Barus (Fanṣūr) in north-west Sumatra.[18] An indication of the strong connec-

tion between Fanṣūrī and Ayutthaya is found in one of his Malay poems, in which the concept of *wujūd* ('existence') is referred to as his birthplace, in Persian, 'Shahr Nawi'. *Wujūd*, that is, 'existence', should not necessarily be considered as a mere philosophical metaphor, but rather as the place where he found a new spiritual identity that led him towards the mystical path.[19]

It is significant that since the fifteenth century, Ayutthaya itself has been known by a Persian epithet, Shahr-i Nāv (City of Boats), among Persian and other Muslim merchants and mariners around the Indian Ocean rim. Already in 1442, the Persian author ʿAbd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (d.1482), in his *Maṭlaʿ al-saʿdayn wa majmaʿ al-baḥrayn*, explicitly refers to the close trade connections between the Persian Gulf emporium of Hormuz and Shahr-i Nāv,[20] although spelling it Shahr-i Naw ('New City'). Arabic sources of the fifteenth century also refer to the same Shahr-i Nāv, rather than employing Arabic equivalent expressions; Ibn Mājid, for example, corrupted it to Shahr Nawā, and several more forms were used among Western mariners and other visitors to Southeast Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[21] The circumstance of Ayutthaya being referred to by a Persian name among non-Thais, as well as the existence of a variety of different spellings for it, has been already dealt with elsewhere.[22]

Persians and Shiʿīs in the Siamese Kingdom of Ayutthaya

In contrast to the case of Persian cultural influences in the Malay world and the spread of Islam there, contacts between Persians and the Thai people, whether via the Persianate Muslim states and trade emporia of the Indian subcontinent, such as the Quṭb-Shāhī kingdom or from Iran proper, became possible only after the Thai people's gradual settlement and domination of the central plains of present-day Thailand. This process of Thai migration from southern China culminated in the foundation of Ayutthaya in 1351 by King U Thong (r.1351–69), under the throne name Ramathibodi, as the capital of the Thai kingdom later known as Siam.[23] Moreover, direct and official diplomatic relations between Siam and Iran, exemplified by the exchange of non-permanent missions rather than by permanent, extraterritorial embassies, became traceable only from Iran's Ṣafavid period.

Ayutthaya is situated about 80 km to the north of modern Bangkok. Strategically located on the navigable Chao Phraya river system which leads to the Gulf of Thailand, and situated equidistant from East Asia and India, it rose to become one of the region's most important trade emporia. In order to under-

stand the historical background of the arrival and permanent presence of Persians and Shiʿīs in Siam, it is important to consider the wider context. During the fifteenth century, the rebellious status of Malay Malacca, and especially its final extinction by the Portuguese in 1511, had forced Siam to look for other gateways for trade with the western Indian Ocean region. During the 1460s, Siam took control of Tenasserim, followed by Mergui in 1480, both important ports on the north-western coast of the Malay Peninsula.[24] In so doing, Siam was able to gain a direct access to the trade emporia of the Gulf of Bengal and the eastern coast of India.

By the second half of the sixteenth century, intensive trade links existed between Golconda's main port, Masulipatam (or Matchlibandar) in India, and Tenasserim.[25] The Quṭb-Shāhī state thus served also as an important gateway to Southeast Asia, and to the Siamese Ayutthaya kingdom in particular, as merchant ships bound for the East used its harbours as stopover ports. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a trade network of Iranian merchants virtually controlled the eastern Indian Ocean maritime trade and operated from southern India.[26] Subrahmanyam's study, for example, contains some valuable material on the biographies of eminent Iranian merchants of southern India, the most successful of them being Mīr Muḥammad Sayyid Ardistānī (1591–1663), who, after growing up in Iṣfahān, went to the Golconda kingdom during the 1620s.

It is unfortunate that to this day, Indo-Persian historiographical literature (especially from the Deccan) has not yet been thoroughly investigated with regard to Siamese–Deccan relations from the fifteenth century onwards. It is this author's conviction that this material would shed new light on the additional educational and cultural activities of not only Persian—but also Ḥaḍramī, Gujarati and Bengali—merchants and their role in spreading Sufism in Southeast Asia.[27]

With regard to Siam, the first Persians in the Ayutthaya kingdom appear to have settled in Tenasserim and Mergui. Although the number of Persians in Ayutthaya remained low until the beginning of the seventeenth century,[28] there is evidence of the Persians' presence in the neighbouring Burmese state of Pegu and in Malacca since the early sixteenth century.[29] Several factors appear to have contributed to an emigration of Persians—mainly from southern India, but perhaps also directly from Iran—to Siam, in particular, during the seventeenth century. These include political instability in the Deccan, the extension of international Ṣafavid trade under Shah ʿAbbās II (r. 1642–66), and the expansion of Siamese trade with East Asia, in particular with Japan,[30] thus resulting in Ayutthaya becoming an important entrepôt in its own right.

Scholars who are today researching the history of the Persian and Twelver Shiʿī communities in the Ayutthaya kingdom are faced with several difficulties with regard to available sources. The first difficulty is the extreme scarcity of surviving Thai sources—a situation that might be attributed to the conquest and destruction of Ayutthaya by Burmese invaders in 1767, which eventually resulted in the almost complete annihilation of Thai literary and historiographic heritage. This catastrophe also affected its foreign communities, among them, the Persians. Hence, all that historians are left with are fragments. Surviving Thai fragments of what is usually referred to as the *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya* show that non-Siamese individuals of Middle Eastern or Indian ethnic origin, including subjects as well as foreign residents and visitors, and Muslims and non-Muslims, are all merely referred to as *khaek*.[31] It should also be added that in most cases *khaeks* are 'hidden' under titles and designations of official Siamese nomenclature. Other fragments of Thai chronicles that survived the destruction constituted the basis of the work of Thai historians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,[32] as well as the late Professor Wyatt of Cornell University[33] and Oudaya Bhanuwongse, who himself is a descendant of seventeenth-century Persian immigrants.[34] I have elaborated elsewhere on the arrival of the first Iranians and other Persian-speaking Muslims in the Ayutthaya kingdom.[35] Here, then, I shall only briefly recall references to a certain 'Shaykh Ahmad Qumī'[36] or 'Kunī' (d.1631), who is said to have arrived in Siam together with his brother, at the onset of the seventeenth century, as a merchant 'from the West', perhaps via the Persianate Shiʿī kingdoms of southern India.[37] However, Subrahmanyam's study has shown that this 'Shaykh Ahmad' is not the first Iranian in Siam, and it is remarkable that Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm—the author of our main Persian source, *Safīnah-yi sulaymānī* (The Ship of Sulaymān)—never did mention 'Shaykh Ahmad' by name or as the alleged ancestor of the colony of Iranians residing in the Ayutthaya kingdom.

'Shaykh Ahmad' is said to have risen in favour with the Siamese king, Song Tham (r.1610/1611–28). He and his followers were granted a village site for their houses, a mosque and a cemetery, which is still known today as Ban Khaek Kuti Chao Sen.[38] Song Tham, a contemporary of Shāh ʿAbbās I the Great (r.1588–1629), under whom Ṣafavid Iran experienced the peak of its power, appointed 'Shaykh Ahmad' to the highest administrative positions, and put him in charge of Siam's entire trade with the Middle East and Muslim India.[39]

In the edited volume *From Japan to Arabia*, Kennon Breazeale has given much attention to the crucial role played by Shiʿī Iranians and Persian-speak-

ing Muslims residing in the Siamese capital in reforming the local administrative system, in particular, the kingdom's maritime relations, in order to enable it to interact more effectively with the outside world.[40] An innovative step was the introduction, by 'Shaykh Ahmad', of the Islamic office of *Shaykh al-Islām*, under the Siamese title *Chularajmontri*, and his own appointment to the position of its first holder by the king. As the *Shaykh al-Islām* office is featured at the top of the Islamic administrative framework in Central Asia, and in many Middle Eastern Muslim states, amongst others in the Ottoman Empire,[41] it can be argued that the rationale behind this innovation is the increase of Ayutthaya's Muslim population consequent to the kingdom's expanding volume of trade with Islamic states in India and the Malay–Indonesian archipelago since the sixteenth century. From the middle of the eighteenth century, the descendants of Muḥammad Saʿīd, the brother of 'Shaykh Ahmad', had converted to Therevada Buddhism, whereas the descendants of 'Shaykh Ahmad' remained as Twelver Shiʿīs, holding the office of *Chularajmontri* until 1945.[42] It is interesting to see that from the nineteenth century both branches achieved the highest positions in state and society under the Chakri dynasty, and in Thai history they became known and prominent as the 'Bunnag' family.

Siam's King Narai the Great (r.1656–88) pursued an even more active foreign policy towards the Muslim world and followed an economic 'open-door' approach. Although a devout Theravada Buddhist, he too surrounded himself with a number of Iranians or Persianate Shiʿīs from India. What was more intriguing was that he was also promoting cultural contacts with Iran, displaying a deep personal interest in civilisations other than his own. He is said to have been engrossed by Iranian cultural influences in terms of his daily food, dress and apparel,[43] but these influences also extended to seventeenth-century Siamese architecture, mural painting and, above all, Siamese royal etiquette and court customs.[44]

Iranians or Persian-speaking Shiʿīs from India were among King Narai's closest advisers, holding sensitive administrative posts and mostly acting as commercial counterweights to the more dangerous European trading companies, in particular, the Dutch East India Company.[45] Engelbert Kaempfer (d.1716)—a German traveller in the service of the Dutch East India Company who had visited Ayutthaya in 1690 and, prior to that, the Iranian capital Iṣfahān—stated that Persian served as a *lingua franca* even among Muslims in Siam.[46] Kaempfer's account would usually be reliable, but as Malay was normally employed in trading matters in the archipelago, it can be inferred that Persian was used for matters concerning trade with the Muslim states in India.

As a matter of fact, King Narai utilised some of 'his' Iranian and Persian-speaking Shiʿīs as ambassadors to various Persianate Muslim courts,[47] and it is worth emphasising that the initiative for sending these embassies came from Siam. In 1664, what was probably the first Siamese embassy to a Shiʿī court was received by the court of Golconda;[48] and in 1669, another embassy arrived at the court of the Ṣafavid Shāh Sulaymān (r.1666–94).[49] Another Siamese mission was in Iran in 1680/1681,[50] and apparently a third one was in Iṣfahān in 1683.[51] This latter one was also recorded by Kaempfer, who prior to his sojourns in Siam and Japan had visited Iran, where in 1984 he had encountered a 'native-born Persian' as the leader of the Siamese delegation.[52] Finally, an official Iranian embassy, sent by Shāh Sulaymān, arrived in Ayutthaya in 1685. We are particularly well-informed about this Iranian embassy, as it is recorded in the Persian travel account *Safīnah-yi Sulaymānī* (The Ship of Sulaymān) by the hand of its secretary, Muḥammad Rabīʿ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, known as Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm.[53] This account seems to be the only surviving document in Persian of Iran's diplomatic and cultural contacts with Siam. In spite of its frequent bias with regard to Buddhism and Thai culture,[54] this report constitutes a source of prime importance.

King Narai's open-mindedness toward the outside world was also reflected in his religious tolerance. Shiʿīs residing at the royal capital benefited from the situation of Ayutthaya becoming increasingly cosmopolitan. Aside from the *The Ship of Sulaymān*, the French traveller and diplomat Guy Tachard (d. 1712) has left a very detailed and vivid eyewitness account of Twelver Shiʿī *taʿziya* processions during the 1680s in Ayutthaya. These observations, made by a devout Catholic, deserve to be quoted here in full, as they are proof of the climate of tolerance and mutual respect prevailing in Siam at the time of King Narai:

> [...T]he Moors [the Twelver Shiʿī Muslim residents of the Siamese capital Ayutthaya,] made great Illuminations for eight days together, in Honour of their Prophet Mahomet [Muḥammad,] and his Son [*sic*![55]], whose Funerals they celebrated. They began to solemnize the Festival the Evening before about four of the Clock at Night, by a kind of Procession, wherein they were above two thousand Souls [!]. There they carried the Figure of the Tombs of those two Impostors, with many Symbols of a pretty neat Representation, amongst others, certain great Cages covered with painted Cloth, and carried by Men that marched and continually turned in cadence to the Sound of Drums and Timbrels. The quick and regular Motion of these huge Machines which we saw at a distance, without perceiving those that carried them, occasioned an agreeable Surprise.
>
> At the Head of this great Confluence of People, some Grooms led three or four Horses in rich Trappings, and a great many People carrying several Lanthorns at the

> end of long Poles, lighted all the Procession and sung in divers Quires after a very odd manner. With the same Zeal they continued this Festival for several Nights together till five of the Clock in the Morning. It is hardly to be conceived how these Porters of Machines, that incessantly turned, could perform that Exercise for fifteen or sixteen Hours together, nor how the Singers that raised their Voices as high as was possible for them, could sing so long. The rest of the Procession looked modest enough, some marched before the Singers, who surrounded Coffins carried upon eight Mens Shoulders, and the rest were mingled in the Croud with them. There were a great many Siamese Men and Women, Young and Old there, who have embraced the Mahometan Religion [Islam]. For since the Moors have got footing in the Kingdom, they have drawn over a great many People to their Religion, which is an Argument that they are not so addicted to their Superstitions [obviously a derogative remark referring to Theravada Buddhism], but that they can forsake them, when our Missionaries have had Patience and Zeal enough to instruct them in our Mysteries. It is true, that Nation is a great Lover of Shows and Ceremonies, and by that means it is that the Moors, who celebrate their Festivals with great deal of Magnificence, have perverted many of them to the Sect of Mahomet.[56]

In relation to the idea of a broader conception of ʿAlid piety beyond the bounds of Twelver Shiʿism per se, the above account of *taʿziya* processions assumes special importance. Apparently, these ceremonies were not only tolerated, but also sponsored by King Narai, Siam's devout Theravada Buddhist monarch. It can be argued that the *taʿziya*, in particular its dramatic interpretation of the fate of a 'wronged hero', might also have appeared popular with non-Muslim Siamese who attended the procession at that time. Rama is one of the many popular figures and deities in Hinduism, and thus also of relevance to the 'Indianised' context of Theravada Buddhist Siam. Rama is revered for his unending compassion, courage and devotion to religious values and duties. His life and journey represent perfect adherence to *dhamma*, despite the harsh tests of life and time. Like the Imāms of Twelver Shiʿism, Rama too is pictured as the ideal man and the perfect human. A Buddhist version of the tale is found in the *Jataka* stories (*Jataka Atthakatha* 461) in the Pali vernacular. Here, Rama is represented as a former life of the Buddha, as a *Bodhisatva* and a supreme *Dhamma*, that is, king of great wisdom. The legend of Rama is deeply influential and popular in the societies—both non-Muslim and Muslim—of the Indian subcontinent and across Southeast Asia. Moreover, from Tachard's eyewitness account we could also infer that the majority of Muslims residing in the Ayutthaya kingdom were, in all probability, Twelver Shiʿīs.

Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm's *The Ship of Sulaymān* is of crucial importance, not only in terms of its character as the only surviving Persian source, but also because Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, in this account, has witnessed a turning

point in the fortunes of the Persian-speaking Twelver Shiʿī community, where Constantine Phaulkon (d.1688), an immigrant of Greek origin, rose to favour with King Narai and was soon appointed to high office. Especially during the later part of his career at the court of Ayutthaya, Phaulkon appeared to have been under the heavy influence of the French, who had their own colonial ambitions in the region. In the 1680s, Phaulkon, who was portrayed in an extremely negative light in Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm's account, managed to outmanoeuvre his Shiʿī opponent at court. Aside from this, the annexation of Golconda by the Mughals in 1687—also reported by Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm—might have slowed or stopped the steady influx of Persian-speaking Shiʿīs to Siam. The death of King Narai in 1688, together with the 'Revolution of Siam', contributed to the further decline of the local Shiʿī community. The nadir was reached in 1767, when Ayutthaya was destroyed by Burmese invaders, with thousands of casualties and prisoners being led off to Burma. By 1722 Iran's capital, Iṣfahān, had already been conquered by the Afghans, leading to the end of Ṣafavid rule and a severing of Iran's trade, as well as cultural and religious relations, with the rest of the Persian-speaking Shiʿī world, including Siam. The end of the Ayutthaya kingdom in 1767 resulted in the end of Persian cultural as well as Shiʿī dominance among its Muslims, and Siam's Shiʿī community never recovered from this disaster. Yet, descendants of some of the original Iranian- and Persian-speaking merchants, for example members of the Bunnag, Siphen and Singhseni families, rose to favour with the new Chakri dynasty and continued to hold positions close to the throne into the twentieth century.[57]

It is worth noting that despite the religious freedom enjoyed by Ayutthaya's Persian-speaking Twelver Shiʿī community, there is no surviving information, whether in Persian or Thai historical writing, or from archaeological remains, on their 'intellectual' activities. The names of the religious scholars are not known. There are also no details available on whether there existed religious institutions beyond those connected with the above-mentioned mourning ceremonies, on whether there were connections with Shiʿī scholars in the southern Indian Deccan kingdoms or Ṣafavid Iran, or whether Shiʿī culture in Siam was dominated by mysticism and philosophy, or by more juristic expressions of Shiʿī religious thought. Answers to these questions would not only be helpful for understanding the religious tradition of Persians 'abroad' in general, but would also shed light on whether there was any antagonism between what is generally known as 'high Sufism' and philosophy on the one hand and a more legalistic tradition on the other, as was happening at that time in Per-

sia. Thus, we can only assume that Islamic traditions in the Ayutthaya kingdom may have been marked by Persian cultural influences on Islamic scholarship as well. Such influences appear to have affected the mystical thought of Ḥamza Fanṣūrī, as we have seen earlier. Therefore, although we do have some knowledge of diplomatic contacts between Siam and Ṣafavid Iran in the seventeenth century, and of the stages of the immigration of Persian-speaking Shiʿīs to Ayutthaya, we are unable to say anything on the intellectual activity of Persian-speakers in Ayutthaya.

Persian influences in today's Thai language

The existence of a Persian-speaking Twelver Shiʿī community in the Ayutthaya kingdom did have several long-term effects on Siamese culture. Although no comprehensive study of Persian elements in Thai language exists yet, several Persian loanwords are discernible in the vocabulary of the Thai or Siamese language, into which they might have entered since the sixteenth century and the Ayutthaya period. Modern Thai contains several words of Persian origin that are in current use, for example the Thai words *dork kulaap* or *kulaap*, which mean 'rose', from the Persian word *gulāb*, that is, 'rosewater'; or the Thai word *angun*, that is, 'grape', from the Persian word *angur*. The Thai words for 'cabbage', that is *kalam plii*, and 'cauliflower', that is, *kalam dork*, contain the Persian loanword *kalam*, that is, 'cabbage'. The Persian word for 'cauliflower' is *gul-i kalam*, which literally means 'the flower of the cabbage', and is the exact meaning of the Thai equivalent, *kalam dork*. However, the most widely used Persian loanword is the Thai expression *farang*, for 'European' or 'Westerner'. The *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, for example, apply the term *farang* for 'Westerners' when referring to events from the sixteenth century.[58] Originating from the medieval conflict between the early Arab Muslims and their 'Frankish' adversaries, this term was borrowed from Arabic, slightly Persianised and eventually transferred to Thai, in which language it also became part of compound nouns. The guava fruit, for instance, which was brought to Siam by the Portuguese, is still called *ton farang* ('Frankish tree') in Thai.[59]

Shiʿism in Thailand today

The *World Factbook*[60] for June 2006 put Thailand's population figure at 64,631,595, and the percentage of Muslims in the kingdom at a rather low 4.6 per cent, with 94.6 per cent being Buddhists. This chapter is not the place to dispute these figures, although perhaps the actual Muslim percentage might

be around 10 per cent. What is more interesting, under the light of what has been expounded above, is that the Muslim community of present-day Thailand, although not ethnically homogeneous, is culturally dominated by southern Thailand's Malays, who adhere firmly to the Sunnī Shāfiʿī legal school.[61] Their cultural and religious perspective is directed toward neighbouring Malaysia and the Arab world, rather than toward Iran or India, as was the case during the Ayutthaya period. The main and decisive historical factor behind the dominance of Sunnī Islam among the Muslims of contemporary Thailand seems to be, aside from the end of the 'Persian intermezzo' during the Ayutthaya period, the incorporation in 1902 of the four southern princely states of Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala and Satun into the administrative framework of the kingdom, resulting in Islam becoming the country's largest minority religion.[62] The dominance of Sunnī Islam also resulted in a change in the appointment of the *chularajmontri* or *shaykh al-islām*. Since its establishment at the time of 'Shaykh Ahmad', the 'head of the Muslim community' had been a Shiʿī, a member of the Bunnag family, and as such a descendant of 'Shaykh Ahmad of Qum'—the Persian immigrant scholar and merchant favoured by the Ayutthaya kings.[63] In 1945, the position came to be held by a Sunnī for the first time. Despite the end of 'Shiʿī dominance', Shiʿī Muslims, most of whom are ethnic Pathans, but also include new Thai and ethnic Malay converts, continue to live in the kingdom, constituting a small minority in metropolitan Bangkok. Although it is impossible to give any numbers, my informants put the number of Shiʿīs in Thailand at 'about one per cent of the country's Muslim population', which would mean tens of thousands of people, depending on which population figures one is basing an assessment. According to the United States Department of State, Thailand's:

> [...] Religious Affairs Department (RAD) reports that there are 3,479 registered mosques in 64 provinces, with the largest number in Pattani Province. The majority of these mosques are associated with the Sunni branch of Islam. The remainders, estimated by the RAD to be from 1 to 2 percent of the total, are associated with the Shi'a branch of Islam.[64]

At present, Shiʿī life in contemporary Thailand seems to be dominated entirely by the Iranian embassy and its Cultural Centre in Bangkok. In addition, there is also the rather quietist 'as-Sayyid al-Khoei (al-Sayyid al-Khūʾī) Centre'[65] in the same city. I have tried to find out more about this institution, but have been told that it is no longer active. Ayatollah Sayyid Abūʾl-Qāsim al-Khūʾī (1899–1992) was perhaps one of the most respected Najaf-based Shiʿī quietist scholars of the twentieth century, fervently dedicated to estab-

lishing welfare, social, cultural and educational institutions under his name for Muslims worldwide, from London to New York, Lebanon, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Thailand. The Iranian embassy in Bangkok tries to promote a 'favourable environment' for Iran by convening conferences and publishing classical Persian literature in Thai translation, such as the poetry of Ḥāfiz, Saʿdī, Rūmī and others. They also produce translations or books about any modern Shiʿī thinkers.

'Shaykh Ahmad' and the history of the presence of Iranians in Siam, for instance, have been the subject of several conferences in Thailand, mostly in conjunction with several local universities. The Cultural Centre of the Iranian embassy houses, on its compound, a 'Shaykh Ahmad Qumi Library', with mostly religious books and publications on Iran and its history and culture. The cultural centre was always actively involved in the organisation of those conferences, the first of which was held in 1994 at Ayutthaya's Historical Study Centre. It resulted in the publication of a volume of proceedings, in Thai, of somewhat limited academic and editorial quality, and containing selected abstracts in English.[66] Another meeting, which was similar in character, took place on 1 March 2003 at the Asia-Pacific Institute of Bangkok's Srinakharinwirot University under the title 'Conference on the Thai–Iranian Relations: Past–Present–Future'.[67] A third conference went under the headline 'International Conference on the Effects of Persian Sufism on Southeast Asia'. It was jointly convened and organised by Bangkok's Catholic Assumption University (AU) and the Iranian embassy, and was held on 7–8 February 2004 at the kingdom's capital, on the AU campus. A volume of proceedings from this event was published in that same year.[68] Lastly, the Iranian embassy organised the fourth meeting under the headline 'Conference on Shaykh Ahmad Ghomi', which took place in Bangkok 23–24 November 2005; it was mainly thought of as an official commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Iran and the Kingdom of Thailand in 1955. The Iranian mission described by the seventeenth-century travel account, *The Ship of Sulaymān*, was the last diplomatic contact between Iran and Siam before diplomatic ties between Tehran and Bangkok were resumed in the twentieth century. It is worth noting that Thailand is apparently the first Southeast Asian country with which Iran established permanent diplomatic relations during the Pahlavi period.[69]

Most of the members of the Thai staff working at the Iranian embassy appear to be converts from Sunnism, some of them ethnically Malay and some of them ethnically Thai. Moreover, most of them are former seminarians of the Twelver

Shiʿī study centres in Iran, such as Qum, and appear to be strong supporters of that country's current political system. Due to this, they often find themselves in isolation vis-à-vis their Sunnī compatriots, and have almost nothing in common with the southerners and their struggle for more autonomy.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to shed some light on selected aspects of the Shiʿī contribution to the formation of Muslim communities in Southeast Asia, with a specific focus on Siam. Certainly, a more holistic approach to the study of Islamic civilisation in Southeast Asia is still needed in order to contextualise the recent phenomenon of renewed interest in Shiʿism. It goes without saying that what has been brought together here cannot be the last word on the issue of the historical presence of Shiʿism among Southeast Asia's Muslims, but rather a first step that would perhaps encourage other scholars to pursue a somewhat more coherent and comprehensive approach.

I have argued elsewhere,[70] and here I differ perhaps most significantly from some of my friends and fellow contributors to this volume, that in the case of Ayutthaya, ʿAlid piety goes somewhat beyond certain cultural and quasi-folkloristic aspects, such as theatrical performances surviving today, which are largely separated from their original exclusive and unmistakably Shiʿī context, an example being *taʿziya*. The fact that national borders are a Western invention, and never really existed in maritime Southeast Asia, cannot be ignored, and within this perspective, Shiʿism should be seen as one of the many elements (goods, peoples, ideas) that freely floated across. That is to say, even if concrete information on historical networks of Shiʿī scholars and study centres in the region are lacking, the undeniable presence of Shiʿism in Southeast Asia cannot be reduced to certain folkloristic aspects that might be of interest to the anthropologist alone.

Unfortunately—especially in the local, particularly Malay Sunnī, milieu—tendencies can be observed to 'rewrite' regional Islamic history in somewhat more puritanical terms, for which there is no justification whatsoever. As I have argued in my book *Shiʿite Identities*,[71] particularly Shiʿī, rather than more diffuse aspects of ʿAlid piety, have always continued to exist in Southeast Asia under a veneer of adherence to 'orthodox' Sunnism à la Ghazālī. To deny this would be to narrow down Southeast Asian Islam and to play into the hands of extremists. The persistence of the office of *Chularajmontri* from the early seventeenth century down to 1945 under a Shiʿī, rather than Sunnī, leadership

speaks volumes as to the respect and trust enjoyed by the Shiʿī community, even from the part of non-Muslim rulers, as this is the only known clear case of specifically Shiʿī sectarian identity established and preserved in a Southeast Asian society.

PART 2

LITERARY LEGACIES

4

SOLDIER AND SON-IN-LAW, SPREADER OF THE FAITH AND SCRIBE

REPRESENTATIONS OF ʿALĪ IN JAVANESE LITERATURE

Ronit Ricci

The question of Shiʿism in Muslim Southeast Asia is a thorny and complicated one, encompassing broad religious and political implications. In addressing this issue, scholars have, at times, been able to point confidently to Shiʿī motifs or affiliations expressed in particular works, or within groups or institutions. In many cases, however, it is not only the answers that have been difficult to come by, but the questions about Shiʿism itself have proved elusive or limiting. Did Shiʿism, for example, exert an influence on a particular writer? Should a certain book be classified as Shiʿī or not? Such inquiries, important as they may be, are often too dichotomous or simplistic to answer in the context of our current state of knowledge. This is certainly the case when Javanese manuscript literature, which is the focus of this chapter, is considered.

A dearth of research conducted on the question of Shiʿī elements in Javanese literature to date, and the overall relatively small number of Javanese texts that have been closely studied and analysed by scholars, make it difficult to offer any valid generalisations on the matter. With much still unknown, scholars are often left to search for particular tropes considered to be closely associ-

ated with Shiʿism, like the motif of light or consistent portrayals of ʿAlī, but it is speculative to draw firm conclusions on the basis of such associations. It might well be, as Wieringa suggested in his discussion of 'traces of Shiʿism' in Malay literature,[1] that stories, ideas and symbols signalling a Shiʿī affiliation in the past were, over time, purged of certain elements and conventionalised in Java—a process Brakel referred to as 'de-Shiʿitisation'[2]—in a way that made them acceptable to all Muslims and no longer clearly identifiable with Shiʿī leanings. Evidence for this assessment, however, is inconclusive. The relationship of Javanese literary works to Persian ones is another related, complex and little-studied matter.

Although translation from Persian has often been viewed as implying a Shiʿī connection, which in itself is an assumption that needs re-evaluation, and although many Malay works were translated directly from Persian and circulated also in Javanese, these works may not exhibit any Shiʿī affiliation; or, even if they do so in Malay, may have been radically transformed in the process of their translation into Javanese and would therefore need to be carefully read and evaluated for any conclusions to emerge.[3] For these reasons, at present, it seems better to move away from the question of whether Javanese literature does or does not exhibit Shiʿī tendencies, and instead consider the wider analytical frame of ʿAlid piety, that is, the fidelity to the Prophet Muḥammad's next-of-kin, which, although a defining element of Shiʿī faith, is common to all Muslims.[4] The concept of ʿAlid piety, which is less dogmatic and more inclusive, allows us to see the broad contours of devotion centred on the Prophet's family as negotiated and articulated in Javanese writing.

In the following pages, I will discuss references to ʿAlī that I have encountered over the past several years in Javanese texts written or copied during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although I was not exploring ʿAlī's figure in a systematic way, but rather focusing on other themes, his consistent appearance in a body of texts I was studying—the *Serat Samud*—caught my attention and inspired me to consider his representation in Javanese manuscript literature. In the first part of this chapter, I examine ʿAlī's appearance in the *Samud* corpus in a comparative light, looking to ʿAlī's appearance in this important textual tradition that traversed geographical boundaries across the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia. In the second part of the chapter, I consider ʿAlī's portrayal in additional Javanese texts. My goal is to explore, in a preliminary manner, some of ʿAlī's diverse representations in Javanese literature, and to consider what such representations might indicate with regard to his place in Javanese Muslim society. I will also briefly engage with some of the

ways ʿAlī's depictions have been understood and categorised by the few scholars who have addressed the significance of his presence in the literature of Java.

Serat Samud

The corpus of the *Serat Samud* in Javanese, which is known as the *Book of One Thousand Questions* in most languages, contains over twenty manuscripts and two print editions that all depict, with various nuances, the story of the Jewish leader Samud Ibnu Salam (ʿAbd Allāh b. Salām) questioning the Prophet Muḥammad. This lengthy and complex question-and-answer debate resulted in the Jew's conversion to Islam, with all his people following in his footsteps. Composed in Arabic around the tenth century, and translated widely thereafter, this narrative was adapted into Javanese in the early eighteenth century, if not before.

In examining close to two dozen versions of the *Samud* story in Javanese, and in comparing them with the telling of the same basic narrative in Malay and Tamil, I was struck by ʿAlī's appearance in the former. In the opening section of the book, in the three languages, the Jewish leader receives a letter from the Prophet inviting him to a meeting. In this letter, Muḥammad declares his role as God's messenger and his goal of spreading the Muslim faith. Since the Prophet is known to have been illiterate, the letter is always depicted as written by someone else who acts as his scribe. There seem to be two traditions about the scribe's identity. In Malay and Tamil versions, the scribe is known as Saʾad b. Abī Wakkāṣ;[5] in Javanese versions, however, the scribe, and often also the messenger conveying the letter, is none other than ʿAlī ('Ngali' in Javanese).

ʿAlī as scribe

The mention of ʿAlī as the Prophet's scribe appears in the earliest surviving Javanese manuscript of the *Samud* narrative dating from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. ʿAlī's role in it may have harked back to the very early Arabic versions, in which he was sent to greet the questioning Jews.[6] Evidence of this role of ʿAlī is found in the 1143 CE translation of the narrative from Arabic to Latin. In this translation, Muḥammad is depicted as sitting with his companions in Yathrib, when the archangel, Jibrīl, comes with a message that four important Jews are on their way to him, to ask for proof of his prophethood. The greatest among them is Abdia iben Salon (Ibn Salam's

Hebrew name). Muḥammad then portends the details of their names and appearance, and sends ʿAlī to meet them. The Jews are astonished that ʿAlī knows all their names, and are already in awe of Muḥammad, as they approach him to ask a hundred questions based on the Law. Guillaume Pijper (the Dutch scholar who, in the 1920s, studied Arabic and Malay versions of this narrative) considered ʿAlī's role in the Latin translation as noteworthy. As in the older Arabic traditions, which pre-date the expansion of the narrative into an elaborate debate, no such mention of ʿAlī was found; he attributed his depiction to Shiʿī influence in the Arabic text.[7] In later, that is, post-1143 Arabic versions, ʿAlī vanishes from the narrative altogether.[8] Indeed ʿAlī's appearance and subsequent disappearance from this Arabic literary corpus raise the questions of whether and how such indications, or lack thereof, point to possible Shiʿī influences in these texts, as well as in their later translated and transformed versions in other languages.

In Java, ʿAlī's appearance within the *Samud* corpus was quite consistent when compared with the Arabic case. For example, in an 1884 *Serat Samud* written in the Pakualam court of Yogyakarta, Muḥammad asks ʿAlī (Javanese: *bagendha Ngali*) to write a letter he dictates to him. The letter is addressed to the leaders of the Jews and Christians, and begins with mention of God's name and the angels, proclaiming itself as the Prophet's letter.[9] Opening with the Arabic *bismillah*, it then offers a translated Javanese version of itself, and calls on the Jews and Christians to acknowledge Muḥammad as God's messenger.[10] Immediately after receiving the letter, the Jewish scholars (Javanese: *pandhita*) approach their guru, Samud, to discuss this event. Nothing further was said of ʿAlī, the letter's delivery, or an interaction between Samud and a representative of Muḥammad.

In several Javanese versions, ʿAlī's role does not end with the letter's inscription or delivery. In the early Leiden manuscript, Muḥammad asks that ʿAlī be the one who leads Samud in reciting the *shahāda* (profession of Islamic faith) and thus, in effect, converting him to Islam. Although the Prophet attends the occasion and, in most versions, is also the one who takes charge of the conversion, in this case ʿAlī is entrusted with the task. In this way, the narrative is framed by ʿAlī's presence, that is, it begins with him writing the letter, closes with him leading Samud and the Jewish community in embracing Islam and then reporting back to the Prophet that the mission has been accomplished.[11]

It is interesting to consider ʿAlī's appearance in the *Samud* corpus comparatively. In the Malay versions I have examined, ʿAlī is only rarely mentioned, and never as the Prophet's scribe or messenger. In the *Hikayat Seribu Masalah*,

edited by Djemaris, he is mentioned once in passing, and in a *Kitab Seribu Masa'il* his name is found on the first page of the manuscript.[12] The page is decorated with plant motifs, with the text appearing within a circle containing the names of the four caliphs, that is, Abū Bakar, ʿUthmān, ʿUmar and ʿAlī in each corner. In these instances, ʿAlī is not singled out in any way. Although, in a way similar to the Malay case, ʿAlī is not mentioned as the bearer of the letter in the Tamil *Book of One Thousand Questions*, he, along with his sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, is praised in the opening section of the text along with the other prophets, companions and *walī*s. All three are saluted as great warriors and likened to fierce tigers—a simile that is often used in non-Muslim Tamil poetry to indicate extraordinary strength and courage, but which also echoes ʿAlī's oft-used heroic title of *haydar* ('the lion') in Arabic texts, and its Malay rendition as *harimau Allah* ('God's tiger').[13] Muḥammad is referred to twice as "Alī's father-in-law', while ʿAlī's sword (Dhū'l-Fiqār) is praised, as is his swift horse, Duldul.[14]

ʿAlī's appearance in these texts is clearly tied to questions of intertextuality and religious and intellectual genealogies, as questions of whether or not he is mentioned in a given text, and in what role, may hint at where a particular version is from, what school it is representing, which earlier sources it may have drawn upon, and its transmission history. For example, Drewes claimed that ʿAlī was only portrayed in Javanese and not Malay versions of the story, and therefore his mention in Malay was seen by Drewes as a clear indication that the particular version was based on a Javanese source.[15] ʿAlī's role as scribe in Javanese versions, but not in post-twelfth-century Arabic, Malay and Tamil ones, may indicate that Javanese versions draw on an older Arabic source. Pijper noted an 1822 Persian version of the narrative, its site of production being unknown, which he concluded had a Shiʿī editor, based on the fact that the *shahāda* appearing in it mentioned not only that Allah was the only God and Muḥammad His messenger, but also that "Alī is God's *walī*'.[16] Thus, mention of ʿAlī and his sons—sole legitimate heirs to the Prophet, according to the Shiʿa, but nevertheless venerated by Muslims across sectarian divisions—is tied also to the broader questions of the relationship between Persian language and literature, Islamic literary production in South India and the archipelago, as well as to contacts between these regions, as several scholars have noted.[17]

Writing of ʿAlī in Javanese literature more generally, Pigeaud claimed that 'it is a well known fact that Shiʿitic concepts once had some influence in Sumatra. No doubt they were introduced by Indian Muslims. In Javanese Islam Shiʿitic features are very scarce.'[18] Persian was indeed an important literary and

religious language in South India and there were sites of strong Shiʿī affiliation in the region, most notably, the two sultanates where Shiʿism was proclaimed the state religion, Bijapur (1502–34; 1558–83) and Golconda (1512–1687).[19] However, it is important that Persian origins of Malay or Javanese texts not be confounded with Shiʿī leanings. As Abdul Hadi discusses in his *Sastra Melayu Bercorak Parsi*, there has often been a tendency, among scholars, to associate Persian with Shiʿism, especially when depictions of ʿAlī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn's martyrdom are concerned. Hamid cautions against this tendency for two main reasons. First, some of the Malay works based on Persian sources were composed prior to the rise of Shiʿism as the official form of Islam in Iran and parts of South India, and their emphases on certain motifs, such as light, exhibit Sufi rather than Shiʿī tendencies. Second, and more pertinently for the purpose of my discussion, 'the devotion towards Islamic historical figures [like ʿAlī and his sons] is not a monopoly of Shiʿī Muslims but rather is practised broadly across Sunnī Muslim society'.[20]

The observation about exercising caution when assuming a connection between Persian sources and Shiʿī leanings in a text—in part, because of the complexities and ambiguities scholars face when trying to assess such leanings, often with little contextual information—seems to fit well with my findings based on a study of versions of the *Book of One Thousand Questions* in different languages. Tamil and Malay versions of the narrative based explicitly on Persian sources, and, therefore more likely in theory to present ʿAlī as a central figure, do not do so. Javanese versions, which Pigeaud claims only rarely mention ʿAlī or his family members as a sign of Shiʿī affiliation, present ʿAlī as the Prophet's close confidant whom he trusts to write a significant document that will bring about the conversion of the Jews.[21]

Associating ʿAlī's textual appearances strictly with Shiʿism is then too limited. He has been an important figure for mystical Islamic circles for centuries, viewed as the spiritual head of a number of Sufi movements, and believed to have received his esoteric knowledge directly from the Prophet.[22] Many traditions attribute mystical sayings or teachings to ʿAlī. For example, a popular Sufi tradition adopted in Java ascribes to him the utterance, 'I look at nothing without seeing God within it.'[23] He is connected to traditions of letter mysticism and Sufi rituals of 'recollection' (Ar. *dhikr*). Various practices commemorate events in his or his family's lives. This is evident, for example, in the important Muḥarram events in south India attended by Shiʿīs and others which commemorate Ḥusayn's martyrdom; this has been described by an early nineteenth-century observer as the Indian Muslim festival 'observed with the greatest pomp and show'.[24]

Since Arabic sources themselves are not unanimous regarding ʿAlī's role in the *Book of One Thousand Questions*, the different translations into Javanese, Tamil and Malay may represent different traditions that converge in the region. Investigating such intertextual details through further research may reveal new and interesting insights on ʿAlī's appearance, as well as Sufism, Shiʿism and the relationship between them more, especially in Javanese sources which thus far seem to have possibly been underestimated.

The *Samud* narrative is instructive in the attempt to improve understanding of the movement of texts and representations, including those of ʿAlī, across Muslim societies in South and Southeast Asia. It highlights the particular roles of ʿAlī as scribe, messenger and ambassador of Islam. In another narrative that strongly echoes the *Book of One Thousand Questions*, and is known in the archipelago in Arabic and Malay, and possibly additional languages, ʿAlī is summoned by the caliph, ʿUmar, to answer the questions of several Jewish scholars from Khaybar. ʿAlī replies successfully and the Jews convert. In this case, the debate takes place after the Prophet's death, and although the caliph—the successor—is officially ʿUmār, ʿAlī, by replying to the challenging questions correctly and persuading the Jews to embrace Islam, is portrayed as filling the Prophet's role.[25] ʿAlī's authority as one who converts others to Islam may well be grounded in his personal history of being the first male convert. The tradition that he became a Muslim at the young age of ten, while being brought up in Muḥammad's household, had already been narrated in Ibn Ishāq's eighth-century *Sīra*.[26] His role as converter is known from many early traditions in Arabic including, for example, those depicting him as being sent by the Prophet to pay blood money to the Bedouin tribes, and to teach them the details of their new religion in 630 CE.[27] Muḥammad dispatched ʿAlī to the Banū Jadhīma tribe after Khālid—one of the commanders charged with destroying their pagan shrines—executed several of his old adversaries, even though they had converted and laid down their arms.[28] However, no matter how central ʿAlī's role as the Prophet's representative was, it was certainly not his only capacity. Just as in the broader, global Muslim tradition, where ʿAlī possesses multiple roles and dimensions, so too is the case in Javanese literature. I now turn to examine briefly several texts that bring to light some of the additional tasks and traits attributed to ʿAlī.

ʿAlī, the warrior

ʿAlī is glorified as a great warrior, a hero in battle, and a courageous and daring man. An example of his depiction in this role in Javanese is found in the *Serat*

Pandhita Raib—a narrative that recounts, in an expanded and mythical fashion, some of the struggles and battles of the early period of Islam.[29] At the core of the story is the figure of Pandhita Raib, a Jewish guru and adviser to the king of Kebar (Arabic, Khaybar), who lures kings already converted to Islam away from their new religion. He is a clever, powerful and brutal man, whom even the Prophet and his closest companions find themselves at a loss to defeat. ʿAlī appears as a central figure, trusted by Muḥammad to lead many of the campaigns against the infidel kings, and against Pandhita Raib himself, whom he pursues tirelessly. Although the details in this narrative vary from those of the more traditional accounts, the designation of Kebar as an important Jewish settlement that surrenders after a Muslim siege in which ʿAlī figures prominently clearly echoes with the early Arabic traditions. In these traditions, it is under ʿAlī's command that the citadel of the Jewish fort is finally entered. Having lost his shield during a battle with a Jew, ʿAlī picks up a nearby door and uses it for protection until the battle is over. A fellow soldier, recounting this episode much later, recalled that he tried, along with seven others, to pick up the door ʿAlī had used but could not, emphasising ʿAlī's unusual strength.[30] In the Javanese text, the Pandhita is so powerful that for a while even ʿAlī's prowess and might are insufficient to overcome him. This position of inferiority is, however, only a temporary one, and ʿAlī does prevail in the end, with the difficulties of reaching his goal ultimately highlighting his remarkable abilities.

In the *Ajaran Sayid Ngali*, which is a brief, undated treatise that appears within a multi-text volume from the Sono Budoyo library in Yogyakarta, ʿAlī is portrayed as instructing an undefined audience in the arts of war, underscoring yet again his image as a hero and military commander.[31] Here, there is no frame-story of battles, ingenious strategy, magical swords and horses. The text is a manual on warfare that draws on ʿAlī's fame in the field, and is framed by the simple yet authoritative declaration that the following are ʿAlī's own words. The reader or listener learns of ʿAlī's talents as a warrior from the depiction of his war strategy and tactics. ʿAlī explains the number of steps to be taken in battle for each day of the week—calculations that will bring about the desired results, which are victory and a safe return. The connection made between strategies and weekdays is typical of Javanese literature, where frequently there are links or overlaps suggested between different realms and elements, for example, the prophets, parts of the body, letters of the alphabet, days of the week and colours. Here, ʿAlī is depicted as adopting this tendency as he instructs his Javanese audience in a familiar way.

If setting off for battle on a Sunday, for example, there should be ten tactical steps taken; on a Monday, only six; and on a Thursday, two. The actual steps or measures are not elaborated in detail, as the text is very short and enigmatic. Yet, it is made clear that in following ʿAlī's instructions, success is guaranteed, even when it may seem highly unlikely. Thus, taking seven steps on a Wednesday promises results likened to the moon defeating the sun, and following the two steps on a Thursday will lead to a victory that commensurates with a mouse overcoming a cat. These examples underscore ʿAlī's role as the ultimate fighter and military leader, as well as the way in which that role is integrated into broader trends in Javanese literature, such as the tendency to link various categories, highlighting their ultimate interconnectivity.

ʿAlī as disciple

ʿAlī is also known, in Islamic traditions, as the Prophet's disciple *par excellence*. He was a man who was raised in Muḥammad's household, who led his armies, married his daughter, and gained great wisdom and piety from his intimate association with the Prophet in all these different capacities. In Javanese texts, his status as disciple is depicted in a genre of didactic works portraying ʿAlī as listening to the Prophet's advice, often alongside his wife, Fāṭima.

These texts are somewhat reminiscent of those analysed by Wendy Mukherjee in her discussion of Malay, Acehnese and Sundanese texts that focus on Fāṭima. In the latter, the emphasis is on the virtues of the good Muslim woman, embodied by Fāṭima, who must always be faithful to her husband, tend to him and serve him, so as to avoid the torments of hell in the afterlife.[32] The Javanese texts, although their tone is similarly didactic and their contents partially overlapping in theme, are also quite different. The Prophet speaks to ʿAlī and Fāṭima as his closest kin, combining fatherly advice with formal prescriptions that pertain to sexual intercourse.[33] The close relationship between the Prophet and ʿAlī is emphasised when ʿAlī is referred to not as (or solely as) *bagendha Ngali*, *Seh Ngali* or *sayit Ngali* as is common elsewhere, but rather as *putra mantu sayit Ngali* (sayid ʿAlī, the Prophet's son-in-law).

It may seem, initially, that this particular type of instruction, coming from Muḥammad and presented to his own daughter and son-in-law, has more of a personal touch than of a broad, public and community-wide message. However, by imparting to ʿAlī these instructions on the sexual dimensions of married life, Muḥammad is endowing ʿAlī with a crucial role in sustaining Muslim genealogy, and through it the continuity of the Muslim community. The rules

and prohibitions that Muḥammad teaches ʿAlī and Fāṭima amount to a guide on how to produce the right kind of offspring, promising a future of continuity and prosperity to the Muslim *umma*.

An example is found in the undated *Dhawuh Sanggama* (advice, orders and instructions pertaining to sexual intercourse) from Surakarta.[34] Like additional texts of this genre, it is divided into two major parts.[35] The first expounds on what is discouraged or forbidden to married Muslim couples. This section begins with the Prophet speaking directly to ʿAlī: 'for a person having sexual intercourse with their spouse, O Ngali, these are my teachings [...]' Muḥammad goes on to instruct ʿAlī that sex on the first and final days of the month is to be avoided, for the outcome will be negative, resulting in a baby who is too small, perhaps premature. Sexual intercourse on Sundays and Thursdays will result in evil offspring and those prone to bad luck, respectively. The list continues with different days, times and sexual practices singled out as bound to produce children who are physically or mentally challenged, or otherwise possess some deformity of character. After ten verses, the Prophet again turns directly to ʿAlī and says, 'Ngali, remember, trust my teachings: O Ngali, for sexual intercourse Monday night is good [...]' This is followed by instructions on auspicious times for coupling, that is, those that will surely produce offspring that are capable in various ways. Interestingly, this section presents several examples that not only stress the physical or intellectual abilities of the children, but also their commitment to Islam. For example, a woman impregnated on a Monday will give birth to a child who, by nature, is diligent in his or her Qur̲'anic recitation (*wataké saregep ngaji*). The final verses dictate the recitation of the *bismillah* before engaging in sexual intercourse, in order to prevent the birth of a dolt (*tuna budi*).[36]

There is a certain irony, perhaps, to ʿAlī being portrayed as inheriting from Muḥammad an expertise in 'Muslim fertility' and, one might say, genetics, considering the tragedy of his own genealogy and the catastrophic effects the premature end of his line had on Muslim history. However, the idea that particular types of sexual intercourse, their timing and gendered levels of desire determine the characteristics of resulting offspring is not unique to this genre in Javanese, and appears in additional traditional texts where no association with ʿAlī, or Fāṭima, is put forth.[37] The same themes and forms of advice continue to circulate in books published in the very recent past. For example, the book *Seks Para Leluhur: Merancang Keturunan Berkualitas Lewat Tata Senggama ala Leluhur Jawa* (2004) includes a section titled 'Memprogram Kelahiran Anak Berkualitas', in which the desirable attitudes and actions on the

part of the future parents are outlined. Even more directly linked to the earlier texts are two sections in *Seks Para Pangeran* (2002), the first of which explains the relationship between desire and a baby's gender, that is, '*[r]asa berahi dan jenis kelamin bayi*', and the second of which delineates forbidden times for engaging in sexual acts, that is, '*[w]aktu yang terlarang untuk melakukan hubungan seks*'.[38] These topics seem to have enjoyed great popularity from the past and into the present; and, as in the example about the knowledge of war, the *Dhawuh Sanggama* and similar texts present an integration or merging of these popular themes with ʿAlī's representation. The combination of such traditions which defined proper and misguided sexual conduct with ʿAlī's image as a devout Muslim, disciple, and husband accorded them great authority, associated, as they were, in the minds of their audiences with the figure of ʿAlī, and with direct instruction by the Prophet.

Conclusion

I began this chapter by noting some of the challenges which scholars face when trying to assess the extent of Shiʿī practice and piety in Muslim Southeast Asia, and Java in particular. Complementing the search for Shiʿī traces with an exploration of ʿAlid piety allows for a broad examination of available materials related to the devotion to Muḥammad's family without the need to immediately ascertain whether or not a story, representation or belief expressed is affiliated with Shiʿism. In my own attempt to do so, I have discussed several of ʿAlī's roles and appearances within Javanese literature, written or copied for the most part during the ninetenth century. As is the case for the broader Islamic tradition, there are multiple facets to ʿAlī's character, as he is known and adored in Java as messenger, ambassador of Islam, warrior, disciple, husband to Fāṭima, Muḥammad's son-in-law, expert on the laws governing sexual practices and as caliph. The range of additional texts and traditions in Javanese that are associated with ʿAlī is, of course, much greater than presented here. There are, for example, the narratives appearing within the voluminous *Menak* tradition, which depict his marriage to Dewi Kuraisin, daughter of Amir Ambyah and with whom he fathers Muhammad Kanapiya (Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya),[39] stories of the many battles he has fought for Islam, his important role as the Prophet's companion,[40] and pertinently, the narrative of his tragic death in 661 CE which constitutes a watershed in Muslim history. The questions of how these traditions are related, the purposes they serve, and what they may tell us about affiliations and controversies within Javanese society in the past and present are certainly worthy of further inquiry.

The study of ʿAlid piety may ultimately bring us closer to understanding Shiʿism in Java and, more generally, across Muslim Southeast Asia. There are clearly points of contact and overlap between the universal Islamic devotion to the Prophet's family and its more particular forms and levels of intensity found in the Shiʿī tradition. For example, Shiʿī tradition attributes to ʿAlī sources that expound on magic, divination, mystical teachings and the occult sciences.[41] The search for ʿAlī's representations in the prolific Javanese literature on such matters may yield an as of yet obscure link to Shiʿī teachings and practices. Whether further inquiry leads to a more nuanced understanding of Javanese Shiʿī leanings or not, exploring Javanese literary sources of the type discussed here can improve our understanding of the range of ways in which ʿAlī and the *ahl al-bayt* have been depicted and related to in living Muslim traditions.

5

FĀṬIMA IN NUSANTARA

Wendy Mukherjee

The late Lode Brakel, in his critical edition of the Malay heroic epic *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*, developed what has become an influential model for understanding how materials identified with Shiʿite Islamic traditions were adapted for an audience of increasingly Sunnī sensibilities in the Malay Muslim world. Consulting thirty manuscripts of differing dates and provenance, Brakel was able to develop a paradigmatic programme of this process, which he referred to as 'de-Shiʿitisation'. While the larger Shiʿī literary products were retained and have survived in their essential form, it was under successive local scribal editing that the most obtrusive Shiʿī motifs in them were deleted, replaced by Sunnī substitutions or 'clad' with greater Sunnī detail in order to 'neutralise' their Shiʿī origins.[1]

The paradigm of 'de-Shiʿitisation', however, was not a universal one. As this volume demonstrates, many phenomena of Persianate or ʿAlid origin are still evident in the literatures and societies of the archipelago. Among some of the earliest literary examples are manuscript representations of the iconic figure of Fāṭima, the Prophet's daughter, and invocations of her within the first streams of Islamic mystical practice in North Sumatra during the fifteenth century and along the northern coast of Java in the sixteenth century. In Java she is named as the foremost '*nabī wadon*', the 'women prophets' of Islam.[2] My interest in

this essay is not in fragmentary evidence of this sort but in a group of texts more widely distributed and more acceptable to Shiʿa and Sunnī alike, which goes under the rubric of 'The Prophet Muḥammad gives advice to his daughter Fāṭima'. Enunciating a list of women's duties in marriage, they belong within the broader category of Muslim *adab* literature regarding the cultivation of good character.[3]

I believe that the image of Fāṭima formed the earliest and chief focus of women's instruction in the manuscript literatures of the major Muslim populations of Nusantara. If this is so, one is struck by Fāṭima's relative loss of significance today. She is not singled out as special in print; her story appears as only one among many of the righteous Muslim women fit for emulation in the many pamphlets now available in mainstream Muslim bookshops in Malaysia and Indonesia.

Origins of texts about Fāṭima

The Fāṭima of history

The Fāṭima of early Islam recreated by Western scholarship is not an engaging personality, for hers was not a happy life.[4] The picture painted is of a timid, retiring woman, painfully thin and physically ailing, modest in habit and comportment and easily moved to tears. Fāṭima lived in privation, 'on the fringe of the great events of the early years of Islam', and was often a drudge for her husband and her father, to whom she was so devoted as to earn the epithet *Umm abiha*, the 'Mother of her Father'. According to eyewitness accounts, she frequently bewailed her fate.[5]

A year after the *hijra* migration from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE, the Prophet gave Fāṭima in marriage to his cousin, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. She is reported to have been distressed on receiving the news of the impending marriage, either because of her deep attachment to her father and her reluctance to leave his side, or because of ʿAlī's poverty and gruff manners. The match proved to be incompatible, which caused the Prophet grief, yet the union lasted until Fāṭima's death in the year 633 and produced two sons, Ḥasan (b.624) and Ḥusayn (b.625), and two daughters. ʿAlī was an often indifferent husband. He sought to exercise the option of polygyny, which the Prophet checked, so that he did not take another official wife during Fāṭima's lifetime.

Of the recorded events in Fāṭima's life, the most significant was her marriage to ʿAlī. She is identified as the link between the Prophet, who had no surviving male children, and lines of the later descent, through Ḥasan and

Ḥusayn, of the Shiʿī imāms and the Sunnī *sayyid*s. Emphasis is placed on ʿAlī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn as the political founders of the Shiʿī branch of Islam and martyrs to the Sunnī, while the Prophet and his House comprising ʿAlī, Fāṭima and their two sons, the *ahl al-bayt*, are the central characters of devotional Shiʿism.[6]

For all Muslims, however, Fāṭima may be regarded as the perfect daughter, wife and mother, and these roles constitute the ideal of Muslim femininity. Fāṭima's unhappiness in her life at ʿAlī's side has been transmuted by believers into the virtue of wifely fidelity and an unshakeable fortitude in the face of hardship. Such ideals are clear in the summaries of the Indonesian texts given in the Appendix.

The Fāṭima of legend

Fāṭima bears the honorific title *al-Zahrā'*, 'The Radiant', after the halo of light which is said to have enveloped her while reciting the Qur'an, and at prayer.[7] She was also known to be steadfast in praying for the souls of martyrs fallen in battle for the cause of Islam, a practice she took up after the defeat of the Muslims at the Battle of Uhud in 625, caring for her father's wounds and being charged to clean his and ʿAlī's bloodstained swords.[8] These attributes too are known and represented in the manuscript traditions of Nusantara.

While both major branches of Islam, Sunnism and Shiʿism, respect Fāṭima, the Shiʿa venerate her especially and have developed a hagiography around her, employing the motifs of her radiance and her virtue. Her wedding to ʿAlī, which according to the classical sources was an exercise in material humility and celebrated in a most modest fashion, has become the stuff of religious legend. So in contrast to the original historical facts, in legend it is told how the marriage was also contracted in heaven, with the attendance of angels and *houri*s. There was also a bride price that included half the earth, with heaven and hell added as well. Fāṭima's trousseau included rare and costly clothes and the wedding feast featured fruits from the Garden of Eden. Precious gems were scattered before the bride in her honour.[9] There are Malay accounts of the wedding of Fāṭima and ʿAlī in this legendary style. An example is *Hikayat Ali Kawin* ('The Story of ʿAlī's Marriage') in which archipelagic conventions of sumptuous celebration replace Middle Eastern characteristics, indicating a continuing local familiarity with this tradition.[10] It is Fāṭima's marriage to ʿAlī that has given rise to the genre of 'brides' lessons' or admonitions to young wives in the archipelago, to which we now turn.

Fāṭima in Nusantara

The Prophet's admonitions to Fāṭima

The admonitions are concerned with the duties of a good wife toward her husband. They are purportedly set in the time of the Prophet and it is Muḥammad himself who delivers the teachings. They are expository texts, cast in direct speech, and their ethical message is addressed to all Muslim women, who must stand beside Fāṭima and hearken to the Prophet's words.

These texts present a man's view of a totally dependent woman for whom he is materially and morally responsible under his religion. The duties of women as wives are described. If these are properly carried out, heaven is the woman's reward; if they are not, then the most horrible punishments will be meted out in hell. (We do not necessarily have an instance of gender bias here: the awful images presented are in keeping with other eschatological texts of the time and similarly harsh punishments await Muslim men who neglect their duties in life.)

These are short texts, consisting usually of only several pages of handwritten script. A number of texts of this type exist in Malay manuscript collections.[11] In this chapter, I will discuss three examples that demonstrate how widespread this textual tradition has been across other literary traditions of the Indonesian archipelago: two handwritten Romanised versions from West Java[12] and a longer printed version from Aceh.[13] These texts are summarised in the Appendix to this chapter.

The arrival of texts about Fāṭima in Nusantara

It can be shown that representations of Fāṭima in the manuscript traditions of the Malay–Indonesian archipelago are as old as Islam itself. The evidence for this is both broadly contextual and narrowly philological, involving historical and textual environments. First, let me provide some brief historical background. After ten years of marriage to ʿAlī, Fāṭima had died in 633 CE. ʿAlī had become the fourth caliph of Islam in 656, though not without opposition, which led to his murder in 661 in the Iraqi city of Kūfa. The Caliphate returned to Sunnī hands under Muʾāwiya (r. 661–80). Ḥasan withdrew from political life and died, possibly poisoned, in 669. In 680, Ḥusayn, refusing to recognise Muʾāwiya's successor, Yazīd (r.680–83), sought refuge in Kūfa, where he could still count on a number of supporters. He set out from Medina, travelling north-east, to meet his famous death as a martyr at the Battle of Karbalāʾ on 10 Muḥarram (10 October 680). His surviving son, ʿAlī

al-Asghār Zain al-ʿAbidīn, was taken captive by Yazīd's forces and thus the hopes of the *shiʿat ʿAlī* on central power in Islam were extinguished.[14]

The links between the Shiʿa and Persia, where it was to become the religion of the state under the Ṣafavids, were forged early and remained strong. Ctesiphon, the capital of the Sasanids, fell to Islam in 638 CE. Ḥusayn is believed to have married Shahrbanu, the daughter of the last Persian Sasanid king, Yazdgerd III (d.651). The geographical proximity of Karbalāʾ to Persia was an important factor and Persian elements became absorbed into the observance of the first ten days of the Muslim calendar as the days of the martyrs Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.[15]

Back in Medina, ʿAlī had been survived by a son, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya (d.700), born to a woman of uncertain status, probably a slave. Though not a descendant of the Prophet's line, al-Ḥanafiyya formed a rallying point for the Shiʿa, and came to assume cultic status among the Shiʿa of Iraq. He played no actual active political role in history, yet his cult, resting on tales of his victories in putative battles to avenge the tragedy of Karbalāʾ, developed in Persia after his death in 700 CE. It eventually passed into the Indonesian archipelago in the form of the well-known heroic romance, the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah* (HMH).[16] The narrative consists of two parts: first, there is an account of the rivalry between ʿAlī and Muʾāwiya, which is played out between their sons in the *maqtal*, or killing, of Ḥusayn at Karbalāʾ by Yazīd. The second section is devoted to the telling of Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya's revenge. Lode Brakel was convinced the story was composed under Shiʿī cultists in the eastern provinces of Iran and quickly travelled to the archipelago. According to Brakel, 'The HMH can be assumed to have originated in Persia in the middle of the 14th century and to have been translated into Malay in one of the coastal centres of North Sumatra not very much later.'[17] The story had also spread into the Indian subcontinent, where the Shiʿa were well-integrated under the Sunnī Moghuls and Persian had become the learned language of most of their territories. Annemarie Schimmel, the scholar of Indian Islam, makes this significant observation about its wide distribution some two centuries later:

> Stories of Islamic origin were told and retold—the impressive pictures painted under Akbar by the tellers of the Hamzanama, the story of the Prophet's heroic uncle, show how popular these tales were in all strata of society. And not only Hamza, but also Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, a son of ʿAlī by a wife other than Fāṭima [...] who plays a prominent role in early Islamic sectarian discussions, became the hero of stories that were told in Urdu and the regional languages of Indo-Pakistan.[18]

In Southeast Asia, Persian influences can be found during what Anthony Reid calls the 'age of commerce' in the region. There were Persian '*ulamā*' in the archipelago and direct trade links with Persia. For example, quantities of benzoin were exported in 1630. Persian Shiʿīs came to dominate trade offices in Thailand. *Shahr-i-Naw*, which means the 'New City' in Persian and the name by which Ayutthaya (the ancient capital of Siam) was known among foreigners, was under Shiʿī rule in 1540.[19] The great North Sumatran mystic and poet of the sixteenth century, Hamzah Fansuri (d.1527), also claimed to have received his mystical illumination in that city.[20]

An account of the earliest Islamic presence in the archipelago by A. H. Johns conveys the picture of a 'quarantine' stage during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when communities of foreign Muslims were 'tolerated as a commercial minority but with little expectation that they should either convert or be converted by the host population'.[21] Reid describes the Islamic cities of the region as a collection of rich houses and compounds around the Sultan's square with his palace, the market, mosque and royal square *alun-alun*.[22] From such houses our two *hikayats* were read, recited, copied and finally, when the conversion to Islam of the archipelago's harbour states gained pace and began to spread inland from the sixteenth century, disseminated into the wider community. Other Persian literary influences from this period on the repertoire of stories in classical Malay are well acknowledged.

Dating texts about Fāṭima in Nusantara

Turning to the philological trail of evidence, it helps to consider the broader literary transmission from West Asia through South Asia. Around the time referred to in Shimmel's observations mentioned above regarding the two epics in popular use in Moghul India, we find the Malay *hikayats* of Amīr Ḥamza and Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya mentioned—both in the same breath—in Nusantara as well. I am referring to the famous incident in the *Malay Annals* when, in 1511, on the night before battle, while the Portuguese lay at anchor off Malacca, the heroes of the Malay court approached Sultan Ahmad to request a reading of the *Hikyayat Muhammad Hanafiyah* to stiffen their valour for the following day. Copies of both texts were brought out and performed. This scene is accepted as the earliest record of the presence and the semi-sacral nature of the two epics.[23] The Sundanese literary critic, Ajip Rosidi, has re-read the *Hikayat Amir Hamza*, which is known in Java and Sunda as the *Menak* cycle of tales—as a conversion text with popular appeal, both in the content of its heroic stories and in the social purpose to which the

text was put. Much as the Hindu epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana had functioned as central to the cultural Indianisation of Nusantara centuries earlier, Rosidi believes the *Hikayat Amir Hamza* was recited in communities newly converted to Islam as a celebration of the new profession of faith, the text thus passing historically from the 'quarantine' to an active proselytising phase in its use.[24]

But how are these two epics, which deal with the exploits of warriors in battle, related to Fāṭima and the ethics of Muslim womanhood? Here we must turn to the philological question of manuscript collocation. Since the admonitions are short texts, they are normally found grouped with others in folder bundles or in codices, manuscript books. These groupings of manuscripts may faithfully reflect scribal provenance and can be crucial to the interpretation of texts. Campbell Macknight has drawn our attention to the fact that the folder or codex environment is often 'not random. It is usually possible to perceive some common interest' within the collocation.[25] Similarly, Ding Choo Ming has argued that a codex-based approach to manuscript bibliography must be adopted, or important connections between texts will be overlooked.[26]

The admonitions have been found in collocation with the two aforementioned epics of Persian origin. In the library of the Breda Museum of Ethnography in the Netherlands, a Malay rendering of the *Story of the Prophet Instructing his Daughter Fāṭima* is attached to Brakel's text K, nr. 458 (2) of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*.[27] Dated 1780, it is possibly the oldest extant version. Another text, the *Story of Fāṭima Talking to the Sword Dhū'l-Fiqār*, is attached to a version of the *Hikayat Amir Hamza* held in Cambridge, MS ADD 3784.[28]

Similar affiliations can be found in yet another consistent pattern in Malay manuscripts. An early Shiʿī repertoire of stories of the Prophet, in fact the oldest in the archipelago, has been identified by Winstedt. These are the accounts of the *Mystic Light of Muhammad* (*nūr Muḥammad*), the miracle of the *Splitting of the Moon*, the *Shaving of the Prophet* and the *Death of the Prophet*.[29] These stories all contain a mention of divine light, a motif strongly associated with Shiʿism and an attribute which Fāṭima, as *al-Zahrā'*, also possesses. Admonitions appear in clusters with these four stories. To cite only a couple of examples, in the National Library of Malaysia, MS 681 contains *The Prophet Admonishes his Daughter Fāṭima*, *The Story of the Prophet's Death* and *The Story of the Splitting of the Moon*, while MS 1420 contains versions of *The Marriage of Fāṭima and ʿAlī*, *The Prophet Admonishes his Daughter* and *The Mystic Light of Muḥammad*.[30]

The net of these affinities stretches even farther. An illustration of internal influence, not collocation, is to be found in a text from West Java, in a Sundanese rendering of the tales of the Qur'anic Prophets, derived from the Arabic *Qisās al-anbiyā'*, which is also an important narrative genre in the Islamic manuscript literatures of Nusantara. Our example was written by the Sundanese man of letters Haji Muhammad Musa (d.1886), who flourished in the 1890s and was closely associated with K. F. Holle (d.1896), a Dutch planter in the Priangan and colonial Adviser on Native Affairs. These two men were the first to collect Sundanese manuscripts and to popularise them in print. The title of the text is *Wawacan Sajarah Ambia* (Tales of the Prophets in Verse) and I consulted a reprinted version of this text in romanised transliteration which I found in the Menzies Asian Library of the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia.

Volume 7 of the *Wawacan Sajarah Ambia* tells of the times of the Prophet in Medina in legendary style. It begins with the funeral of his uncle, Amīr Ḥamza. Among the mourners is Ḥamza's daughter, Dewi Kuraesin, or perhaps Quraysh[31] who, since her mother was a *jinn* and her father a champion in battle, is a formidable fighter for the cause of Islam, which is a distinction she shares with ʿAlī. In due course, the Prophet gives permission for ʿAlī and Dewi Kuraesin to marry, and from this union is born the son, Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya. There is a short narration of Fāṭima's acceptance of ʿAlī's secondary wife and of her affection for their son. It is told that the three boys, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn and Muḥammad, play happily together and the reader is explicitly alerted to the fact that Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya is destined to avenge the deaths of his two elder brothers, the martyrs of the Shiʿa.[32] Thus this Sundanese example draws together and extends the legendary material of the *Hikayat Amir Hamza* and the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah* epics, while presenting a vignette of Fāṭima's generosity of spirit.

Geographical distribution and variation in the admonitions addressed to Fāṭima

Regional variation

Many of the major Southeast Asian Muslim manuscript collections contain texts of the Prophet's admonitions to Fāṭima. Malay is by far the best represented, given the history of the first propagation of Islam from North Sumatra, and it is generally assumed that texts in other languages are translations of Malay originals. Acehnese and Sundanese are well represented, with Javanese

less so, according to Pigeaud's catalogue.[33] A Buginese version has been noted.[34] The contents of these texts are not by any means immutable; in fact, there is a high degree of variation. It is unclear to me at this stage, however, whether differences have emerged under regional conditions and over time or if the Malay originals themselves varied, which is an equally likely possibility. Variety within a corpus usually indicates a long-standing tradition.

The core of the admonitions

The common 'core' of the texts is the affirmation that a woman must be faithful to her husband in all things and always considerate of his comfort. This fidelity is both a virtue and a duty that will be rewarded in the hereafter. Dereliction of this duty by women is described as a sin as grave as the neglect of the *'ibādāt*, the duties to God. The texts also describe, in varying degrees of horrifying detail, the torments of hell which await impious women (see Appendix).

Fāṭima in Aceh

The Acehnese text which I consulted with the help of an Acehnese informant[35] appears to have connections with a spirit of militant Islam and resistance to Dutch colonial control. Millenarian revivalist tracts were a feature of late-nineteenth-century Islam and were a manifestation of anti-imperialist sentiment in the Malay–Indonesian archipelago. Known as *wasiat nabī*, or 'admonitions of the Prophet' among the people, the circulation of these texts was carefully monitored by officials of the Netherlands East Indies government and were collected to be used in evidence in the court prosecution of Islamic insurgents. The long war between Aceh and Dutch colonial forces (1873–1908) was such an occasion for their use. As documents, *wasiat* usually recited a dream vision in which the Prophet appeared to a believer, enjoining his community to adhere more closely to the laws of Islam and to avoid the company of the ungodly and non-believers. Such *wasiat* have also been reported in circulation among Muslim communities under colonial rule in the Middle East.[36]

Certain texts of the Prophet's Admonitions to Fāṭima may have been among the *wasiat nabī* in circulation, since the Acehnese manuscript, undated but recently romanised and printed, goes under precisely this title. It is attached to a retelling of the story of Nabī Ibrahīm which must be part of the *Anbiyā'* corpus. The text was copied in Pidie, Aceh in 1962 and was acquired

for publication in 1983 from a scribe, Ishak Peuteua Gam, who at this late date was still able to earn his living from copying manuscripts and composing works in a traditional style.[37] The *Wasiet Nabi* is in verse and 18 pages long in its transliteration.

In this Acehnese version, the admonitions to Fāṭima are linked to the incident of the Prophet's battle sword, Dhū'l-Fiqār, which was inherited by ʿAlī and to which legend has accorded the miraculous power of speech. The incident occurs at some time during their marriage. Fāṭima is overheard by ʿAlī in conversation with Dhū'l-Fiqār inside her apartment. She asks the sword how many souls of the enemies of Islam it has claimed and the sword replies that they are countless. ʿAlī wrongly suspects Fāṭima of adultery, thinking she is entertaining a man within, and takes his complaint to the Prophet. Upon investigation, Fāṭima is vindicated as blameless and ʿAlī is rebuked. Even so, she is then reminded about her duties to her husband. The *Wasiet Nabi* corresponds closely to Snouck Hurgronje's summary of the *Hikayat Peudeueng*, the 'Story of the Sword' presented in his famous study, *The Achehnese*,[38] and recalls the Cambridge Malay manuscript identified above by Ding Choo Ming.[39] Judging by its contents, this version is quite old, with its emphasis on the depiction of the torments of hell. Its spirit is certainly worthy of a *wasiat*. In its latter part, however, the tone lightens, becoming encouraging to the believer and specific to Nusantara in its imagery. It offers a scene of heaven of unbounded rice-fields and streams flowing with milk and red palm sugar (see Appendix).

Fāṭima in Sunda

In West Java, the Prophet's admonitions to Fāṭima appear to have been put to more staid social purposes. There, they form courtesy books for the families of the aristocracy (*priyayi*) and the native ranks of the colonial civil service. The texts which I consulted were transliterated into Roman script and copied out by hand in 1925 and 1926 from the collection of Sundanese manuscripts of the Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences under the orders of R. A. Kern, who was then Adviser on Mohammedan Affairs to the colonial government. These copies are now held in the collection that carries his name, the Kern Collection, MS 1673 of the National Library of Australia in Canberra. In these texts, the framing event is not the story of the sword but the wedding of Fāṭima and ʿAlī. In MS 106, *Wawatjan Nabi Moehammad keur moeroek poetrana awewe djengenan Dewi Patimah* (The Prophet instructs his daughter, Dewi Patimah, by name) which is in verse and three pages in length, it is stated that the Prophet speaks before the ceremony, when Fāṭima is still under

his roof. MS 119, *Nabi Moehammad keur ngawoeroek poetrana Dewi Patimah* (The Prophet instructs his daughter, Dewi Patimah) which is in prose and seven pages in length, narrates that Fāṭima, newly married, is refusing to join her new husband in the marital bed. This is called *pista*, which is behaviour typical of virgin brides in Sunda and is a common trope in Sundanese romantic stories told against the practice of arranged marriage. Fāṭima's reluctance also recalls the classical Arabic account of her reaction on her betrothal to ʿAlī. So even within these two closely associated texts from the same linguistic region, some variations can be observed with regard to the narrated circumstances of the delivery of the Prophet's advice.[40]

Certain changes around the structural 'core' are also found. MS 106 is paraphrased by MS 119, and in essence, both texts present wifely faithfulness as an *ʿibāda*. However, while MS 106 stresses the horrible punishments awaiting immorality, as in the Acehnese admonitions, MS 119 is extended by a section on social etiquette and good housekeeping, a dimension of *muʾamalāt*, or good works, and so carries a more benign tenor. This change might be accounted for by a slightly later trend in Sundanese Islam towards modernism around the turn of the twentieth century, or is perhaps explained by the growing influence of Dutch colonial education, of which the training of girls in the housewifely arts of cooking, sewing and maintaining modern hygiene formed a part.

A parallel to developments in the Indian subcontinent suggests itself, in a much larger compilation of *adab* writings for women, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Urdu *Bihishti Zewar* (Heavenly Ornaments). Maulana Thanawi (1864–1943) was a prominent *ʿālim* of the north Indian Deobandi reform movement who flourished in the late nineteenth century and thus was contemporary to the time when the last of the admonitions to Fāṭima were being copied or rewritten by an anonymous scribe in Sunda. His instructions to women on good housekeeping and the raising of children are detailed and far-reaching, filling two chapters of the tenth book of the compilation, but the necessity for the *umma* to adapt to the changing times concerns both authors and impels both texts.[41]

The preservation and end of the Fāṭima admonitions

Today, Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia overwhelmingly adhere to the Sunnī form of Islam. What then are we to make of the continuing presence of ʿAlid texts in the literary traditions of Nusantara? Could it be by sheer weight of the antiquity of the literature and the value traditionally placed on texts as

cultural artefacts that they have been preserved? In India, by comparison, this appears to be true. The fundamental religious lessons of the period of conversion to Islam were quickly set and fixedly retained thereafter. According to Schimmel, 'The customs, rites and rituals that crystallised in the first centuries of Islamic rule in India were to remain more or less unchanged for the centuries to come [...] on the whole the life of Indian Muslims'.[42]

Against this type of conservatism, one might equally argue in favour of the proposition that a text had to demonstrate its social usefulness to survive and be reproduced. The popularity of the epics, the *hikayats* of Amīr Ḥamza and Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya, may have carried the Prophet's instructions to Fāṭima along with them in their widening appeal. However, the more probable reason for their continuing reproduction lies in the practical uses to which these texts were put. As Islamic communities in the archipelago grew in number, so did the libraries of books governing the ordinary life of Muslims, of which the regulation of marriage was especially important.[43] It is in this respect that the admonitions to Fāṭima most likely transcended their Shiʿī origins and found favour among Sunnīs. In keeping with literary practice in the archipelago, we can assume that public recitations were held for the benefit of women. It is also possible that young women studied the texts within some form of a girls' curriculum of Islamic instruction under a learned woman teacher. They would also have been suitable to be rendered in songs to brides during the traditional celebration of weddings, in Sundanese a custom known as *sawer*.

And what is the fate of representations of the figure of Fāṭima today? Are they still to be found, and to what purposes are they put? Here I can only offer anecdotal evidence. I understand from conversations with women teachers in Javanese *pesantren* that bridal instructions to young women are still regularly given, although they are not necessarily associated with Fāṭima's name.[44] On a devotional level, it has also been reported that simply produced booklets of lamentations for Fāṭima, entitled *Seulawat Wafeut Sitti Fatimah Aneuk Rasulullah*, are still on sale in bookstores outside *pesantren* in North Aceh.[45] In Jakarta, among new Shiʿī women's groups, Fāṭima forms the object of devotion of mothers and younger women contemplating motherhood. In these groups as well, she is assuming a renewed significance as the symbol of 'purest femininity among the hidden mysteries of Islam'[46]—which sounds very much like a return to her place among the *nabī wadon*, the 'women prophets' of sixteenth-century Java.

APPENDIX

1. *Acehnese text, Wasiet Nabi, Ramli Harun, 1984*

Fāṭima is brought before the Prophet by her angry husband, ʿAlī, who accuses her of adultery, having overheard her talking with the speaking sword, Zulfakar (Dhū'l-Fiqār). The Prophet exonerates her but still orders her to beg her husband's forgiveness, then instructs her as follows:

Obey your parents and your husband. Do not use his possessions without his permission. Pray always for his wellbeing.

If he comes home tired and you bathe him, it is equal to a sacrifice of 1,000 sheep and 100 camels, or to feeding hundreds of people in need.

The woman who perishes in childbirth dies a martyr's death. There is no salvation for a woman who is unfaithful to her husband; hell is her portion.

When your husband sets out to travel, let him leave happily and greet him cheerfully when he returns. This equals the merit of ten Great Pilgrimages.

Three rewards await the good woman: she will know God's mercy, her virtue is as if she has sacrificed ten camels and she is assured of heaven.

For the sin of infidelity, the punishment is hell. The angel Zabaniyya pours boiling water over the bodies of unfaithful women.

It is a sin for women to answer roughly to their husbands' questions—though such women be as plentiful as grass in the fields. For harsh words uttered, a fishing hook is clipped into those women's mouths, and for insults to husbands, boiling water is poured into their throats.

In heaven, all is bright as if lit by the full moon. A cool breeze blows gently over most beautiful scenes. Lovely women sit in pavilions while violins play softly behind. All beings are close to God.

But those in hell wail and lament. The angels weep over women who have been lazy or dirty in their speech, and over adulterers, thieves, opium eaters, slanderers, gamblers and those who enjoy carousing with singers of pantun. And they weep over those who have been careless in bathing, going to the stream any time of day, or not even at all.

Hell stands upon the feet of four giants. It is vast enough to contain a pounding ocean, its torments are of all kinds imaginable. No one can find the way out; the angel Zabaniyya stands guard, castigating evil-doers with a mighty voice. There are high mountains there, and drains in which foul water flows, and worms and scorpions to fill rotting skulls. And other things that we cannot know of, and fierce, venomous vipers, breathing fire.

A swarm of scorpions surrounds the sinners. Their bodies are wood for the hell-fires. No one has wealth enough to bribe his way out.

But believers are loved and enter heaven rejoicing. There stretch rice-fields, more than plenty, and sweet streams flow with milk, palm-sugar sweetened, while lovely gardens

beckon. Heaven's people have their every desire satisfied, and coloured carpets are spread about. The halls are well-lit and inlaid with gemstones. We cannot recount all the delights of heaven.

As for the good wife who urges her husband to attend Friday prayers at the mosque, her face shines like the full moon. She who kisses her husband and turns a sweet face to him has all her sins forgiven.

As for women who dress immodestly and mix freely with men, and paint their hands and feet with henna: men should avoid such women, or they too will weep with them in hell.

The virtuous woman encourages her husband to virtue and serves him. This is ʿibāda, God's Law. Women who have neglected their duties will beg for their time on earth again in order to repair their ways, especially those always busy with a mirror in one hand and lip colouring in the other.

Women! Do not quarrel with or neglect your husband. When he arrives home, wait with clean water to wash away his sweat, then serve him food.

Women! Let religion be the main pillars of your house and your good works its walls. Neglect of the prescribed prayers casts a stain on you, and disregard of the Prophet's words is a pollution of all your body.

Remember! You must leave your worldly goods behind, and your heirs will come to help themselves. Do not be so busy with the world that you neglect the prescribed prayers.

2. *Sundanese Texts from MS 1673, Kern Collection, National Library of Australia*

Ms 106, Wawatjan Nabi Moehammad keur moeroek poetrana awewe djenengan Dewi Patimah

The advice of the Prophet to his daughter Fāṭima, while still living in his house, on how to be saved from the torments of hell.

1. *The worst act a woman can commit is to be unfaithful to her husband. Her body will be burned in hell and its pus will give off a foul odour.*
2. *If she hides from her husband's company or refuses him her favours when he asks, the angel Zabaniyya will open the door to hell for her.*
3. *When called to his bed, she should join him straightway. The signs of a virtuous woman are her fasts, her prayers and her reading of the Qurʾan.*
4. *The woman who requests divorce will have her lips cut off with scissors and hung up in hell.*
5. *The woman who refuses to take a husband is not pleasing to God.*
6. *Do not put on perfume without your husband's express consent, for it incites evil desire in others.*
7. *It is an act of treachery to be called home by your husband and not to return straight away.*

8. *Finally, let no outsider see you immodestly dressed, or you shall be bound around your breasts, hands and feet and shackled in hell.*

Ms 119, Nabi Moehammad keur ngawoeroek poetrana Dewi Patimah

The Prophet admonishes his daughter who has refused sexual union with her husband, which is a great sin. The angels will weep and open the door to hell for her.

1. *The worst of things that a woman can do is to be unfaithful to her husband. Her body will be burned in hell and the stench will fill the earth.*
2. *Should she refuse to come to her husband (in bed) when he calls her, the angel Zabaniyya will push her into hell. Observance of the prayers will not save her.*
3. *The woman who asks for divorce from her husband will be cut into pieces with scissors and hung up in hell.*
4. *The woman who does not take a husband in this life will receive no rewards in the hereafter.*
5. *She who wears perfume without her husband's consent will be consigned to hell for a thousand years.*
6. *She who sets out from her house without first informing her husband commits a great sin.*
7. *Women! When darkness falls, if you do not supply light to your kinsfolk, this is a sin.*
8. *If you dress immodestly, your hands and feet will be bound in hell.*
9. *The woman who likes to gossip with her friends and stays outside her house, avoiding her husband, commits a grave sin.*
10. *If you tell a lie to your husband, your lips will swell up to the size of mountains.*

Fāṭima! You must present your body freshly bathed to your husband. Though you be beautiful as a heavenly nymph, still serve your husband faithfully.

Prepare his food and drink. Always have his sarong ready for him to wear to the mosque.

Be patient with your husband. Contribute your wedding endowment to the household's needs.

The performance of the five daily prayers keeps the Devil away.

Keep your husband's clothes clean and in good repair. Retain affection for his family and show hospitality to his guests. Be kind to all those around you.

Do not neglect the ritual prayers. Prepare light, food and drink for the household on Fridays.

Feed reciters of the Qur'an. Provide food and clothing to your neighbours when they are in mourning.

6

PENGHULU SEGALA PEREMPUAN

FĀṬIMA IN MALAY DIDACTIC TEXTS FOR WOMEN

Mulaika Hijjas

> Those of my relations who are women [and] read this story of Fatima al-Zahra or listen to it, and follow that which has been taught by the Prophet to Fatima al-Zahra, and avoid that which the Prophet has [warned] Fatima al-Zahra against, will be of one community with Fatima. Whosoever does not follow [the teachings of] this story, that woman will not be of one community with Fatima. My women relations, verily those who follow [the teachings of the story] will elevate their state in this world and the next [...][1]

Among the corpus of didactic texts for women in the Malay manuscript tradition, of which there are more than forty extant works now held in the main manuscript collections,[2] the most frequently encountered paragon of female behaviour by far, with more than 23 manuscripts in which she is the protagonist, is Fāṭima. On the one hand, the prominence of Fāṭima requires no explanation. She was the only child of the Prophet Muḥammad to survive into adulthood and was said to have been particularly loved by him. As stated by Muḥammad in a widely-recorded *ḥadīth*, 'Fāṭima is a part of me and whoever offends her offends me'.[3] Moreover, as the wife of ʿAlī and the mother of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, she ensured the survival of the Prophet's lineage. It is important to note from the outset that while Fāṭima may have a particularly

exalted position among the Shiʿa, Muslims of all persuasions are likely to hold in reverence someone so closely connected to the Prophet. Nevertheless, it is worth asking why Fāṭima figures so prominently in the Malay manuscript record, especially since in contemporary Indonesian and Malaysian discourse about women's duties she seems to have been supplanted by the Prophet's wives: Khadīja, who was the first person to recognise his divine mission; and ʿĀ'isha, who was a major political player after his death and an important source of *ḥadīth*. As a case in point, the women's wing of the Muhammadiyah in Indonesia, founded in 1917, is called the Aisyiyah.

The particular role that Fāṭima plays in these Malay texts also requires explanation, for here she is not the *mater dolorosa* of the Arabic and Persian chronicles, but more often a radiant and superlatively beautiful princess, along the lines of the heroines of Malay–Javanese Panji romance. Most strikingly, in the Malay didactic texts, as elsewhere in Malay–Indonesian folk tradition, Fāṭima represents the archetypal wife. Her didactic teachings have little to do with Islamic orthodoxy or orthopraxy and everything to do with sexual and domestic servitude.

It is essential, first of all, to acknowledge the work of two scholars who have already contributed much to the study of Fāṭima in the Malay world: Edwin Wieringa and Wendy Mukherjee. In her contribution to this volume, Mukherjee identifies texts about Fāṭima as constituting a corpus on 'women's ethics', and focuses, in particular, on a text from Aceh and two from Sunda.[4] While the present study covers much of the same ground as Mukherjee's pioneering chapter, it looks specifically at Malay texts which she excluded from her account. Wieringa's broader study, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic Elements? ʿAlī and Fāṭima in Malay Hikayat Literature', surveys Persian influence in a range of Malay works, noting the role of Fāṭima as the ideal woman and as intercessor on behalf of other women.[5] In answer to the question posed by his title, Wieringa proposed that there was once 'a Shiʿa tinge' to Indonesian Islam, which was 'gradually purged' over time[6]—a theory with which the present chapter broadly concurs.

Before turning to Fāṭima in the Malay manuscript tradition, it may be useful to see how she is depicted in the wider Muslim world, and especially in Shiʿī hagiography. There is little enough to be found about Fāṭima in the standard eighth- to tenth-century Arabic accounts of the early years of Islam (al-Yaʿqūbī, Bukhārī, Ibn Saʿd, etc.).[7] The Prophet is said to have refused Abū Bakr and ʿUmar's requests to marry her, but to have encouraged ʿAlī, despite the latter's poverty. Told by her father that she was to marry her father's pater-

nal cousin, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, Fāṭima reportedly responded either with silence—interpreted as consent—or with protest. To persuade her, the Prophet explained that he had chosen for her 'that member of the family who was the most learned and wise, and who had been the first to embrace Islam'. Fāṭima was then aged between 15 and 21. The ceremony was very modest, and their married life was extremely impoverished and not without disputes, which the Prophet was called upon to resolve. Nothing is said about Fāṭima's physical appearance, and on the whole, the impression given is of a pious, sober, self-effacing and rather lachrymose woman. Later Shiʿī sources, including those from Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī (d.10th century), Ḥusayn b. ʿAbd al-Wahhab (d.1056–7), and Ibn Shahrashub (d.1192), provide a rather more glamorous picture, as we shall see. The transition from the asceticism of the early days of Islam to the exuberance of the tenth to twelfth centuries reflects, of course, the development of the faith, its transition from conditions of hardship and marginality in Arabia to wealth and conquest in Persia and beyond, and its schism into Sunnī and Shiʿī.

The particular importance of Fāṭima to the Shiʿa is obvious: she is the female progenitor of the imāms and the closest genetic link to the Prophet. It is worth pointing out, however, that among the modern Shiʿa, Fāṭima is not always the female paragon of choice. As noted by Pinault, several other women in Shiʿī hagiography may take centre stage, depending upon the tastes and exigencies of the times.[8] If the defining moment for the Shiʿa is the battle of Karbalā', which took place in 680 after Fāṭima's death, then it is to be expected that the women who were present there have a special prominence. These include Fāṭima's daughter, Zaynab bint ʿAlī, and her granddaughters (from Ḥusayn), Fāṭima Kubra and Sakina. Pinault shows that at different historical moments in modern Iran, for instance, different heroines have taken centre stage. During the revolution against the Shāh, the activist Zaynab was the favoured model for women, whereas once the theocracy had been established, the two Fāṭimas and the infant martyr, Sakina, came to the fore once again.[9] Two points should be noted here with reference to Fāṭima and ʿAlid piety in the Malay world. The first is that if mainstream Shiʿī tradition itself picked and chose exemplars from among the *ahl al-bayt* to suit contemporaneous agendas, it should be no surprise that the depiction of Fāṭima in the Malay world owes more to local circumstances than to historical accuracy. Secondly, the absence in the Malay manuscript tradition of the more exclusively Shiʿī figures of Zaynab, Fāṭima Kubra and Sakina, as opposed to the more generally ʿAlid Fāṭima al-Zahra, tells its own story. While some Malay texts, the fore-

most among them being *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, which was so comprehensively studied by Brakel,[10] have Persian Shiʿī origins, the same cannot be said for the didactic texts for women discussed here, as we shall see. To begin with, however, we will consider Fāṭima in the Malay tradition.

Fāṭima in the Malay didactic texts

As with many traditional Malay texts, the titles of the tales about Fāṭima are prone to various mutations, but broadly speaking, four different narratives with her as their protagonist can be identified: *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima*; *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami*;[11] *Hikayat Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir yang Miskin*; and *Hikayat Fatima Berkata-kata Dengan Pedang Ali*. These four texts may be broadly divided into two strands. The first, represented by *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima*, is simply a collection of dicta for women concerning their duties to their husbands. The realia of this text, including outdoor bathing and drinking rice wine, make clear that the setting is not Medina but the Malay world. Indeed, there is not much that is specifically Islamic here, other than the figures of Muḥammad and Fāṭima, who function as little more than talking heads. The further three titles evince far more awareness of a Middle Eastern milieu, utilising characters and circumstances from the early days of the Muslim community, albeit not in a way that would satisfy a scholar of *ḥadīth*. It is important to stress the particular milieu or social strata that were most probably the home of the Fāṭima texts. They belonged neither to the highly literate and cosmopolitan court, like *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, nor would they have been found in the upper echelons of the *pesantren*, like *kitāb* literature. Rather, they seem most at home in the elementary religious education classes that both boys and girls attended, as part of the stock in trade of commercial lending libraries in urban *kampung*s, or to be read aloud during the all-night vigils for wedding ceremonies.[12] These texts are not sophisticated religious treatises that explicitly engage with doctrinal or theological controversies, which is not to say that they are not marked by such controversies, as the 'Rafiḍī' marginalia in Cod.Or. 1953 discussed below makes clear. They reflect, above all, folk religion.

Furthermore, both strands of the Fāṭima texts seem to have been intended for female readers and listeners. Apart from the story about Fāṭima and the beggar detailed below, which preaches the importance of charity, all transmit didactic messages about wifehood. In contrast, didactic texts with male protagonists, such as *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Ali*, are concerned with ungendered

virtuous behaviour, such as humility, kindness to orphans and steadfastness in friendship.[13] *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Ali* does, however, warn against 'excessive love for women'.[14] Perhaps nothing more need be said about the assumption of the masculine subject as universal. The fact that women are the intended audience of the Fāṭima texts may have a bearing on the presence, or otherwise, of elements from the Islamic heartlands. I do not know of any corresponding texts intended for women—as opposed to about women—in Arabic or Persian.[15] The book on marriage in al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'* '*Ulūm al-Dīn*, for instance, is addressed to men.[16] This may mean that the Malay didactic texts for women, with the lack of Islamic models, draw more heavily on indigenous and/or local syncretic elements than do works belonging to other genres.

Before discussing the texts, the caveats obligatory to the study of Malay manuscripts must be issued. I have fixed the labels 'eighteenth century' and 'nineteenth century' to the manuscripts discussed in this study because this is strictly true. The physical copies were made at those times, as evidenced by the colophons, paper, watermarks and other philological data. The cultural and climatic ecology of island Southeast Asia meant that almost all the extant Malay manuscripts date from the nineteenth century. Therefore, we are left with a tradition of many centuries represented by a limited and potentially misleading selection of late documents. As Proudfoot wrote, the nature of the surviving Malay manuscript collections

> leave[s] us uncomfortably dependent upon the interests and collection policies of a few 19th-century Europeans and their local collaborators, and with little reason to think that we have been bequeathed an accurate snapshot of the manuscript tradition even in its last phase.[17]

Clean copies made for Europeans may not be the best guides to the authentic indigenous tradition. It is usually the case that the texts, that is, the narratives themselves, originated much earlier, though it is not possible to say precisely when or what changes may have taken place along the way. For example, successive scribes and copyists may have made erasures and amendements as religious mores shifted, but usually without necessarily calling attention to the fact that they did so. One is left with the tautology of trying to date the text according to what is already known about the religious climate, of which information may come, at least in part, from similar texts. Moreover, these textual changes may not be linear or consistent, so that while it is tempting to argue, as Winstedt famously did, for distinct strata in traditional Malay literature (indigenous, Hindu–Javanese and Islamic), this is not likely to be accurate.[18] A more conservative approach is to take each text as a snapshot of

the milieu and of the predilections of the copyist that produced it, or, as Kratz puts it, as 'a witness in its own right of a particular tradition in a particular place at a particular time'.[19] It is in this spirit that the following summaries are provided: rather than attempting to represent an essentialised version of a text, with Wieringa having noted how the researcher in this field is hampered by the lack of 'the necessary philological *Vorarbeiten*',[20] the reader is given three accounts of a particular example, quirks and all.[21] Summary is, of course, a slippery task: a small change of wording or emphasis, or the addition of a new anecdote at the end of a text, may give a particular manuscript a radically different import from others that go by the same title. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the following summaries will provide the reader with a sense of particular instantiations of the various narratives.

Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima *(PNRI Malay 52)*

Mentioned in the transactions of the Bataviaasch Genootschap of 1869,[22] this manuscript begins by identifying Fāṭima as 'leader of all the women in this world' ('*penghulu sekalian perempuan dalam dunia ini*'), as her father is the leader of the 233,000 sacred prophets in the world. As she reaches the age of fourteen, Muḥammad embarks on teaching her the duties of wives. Fāṭima is eager to learn, more so since she has heard that 'people with husbands have a lot of sins'.[23] This turns out to be quite accurate, as the Prophet explains: though the potential blessings of marriage are as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the beach, the potential sins are just as numerous. Indeed, if a husband has not forgiven his wife for her sins against him, even Allah will not be able to forgive her, and this applies equally to Muḥammad and Fāṭima as well as everyone else. Muḥammad then lists the ten virtues ('*kebajikan*') and vices ('*kejahatan*') of wives towards husbands. With regard to the vices, Muḥammad again explains that he can only provide *shafāʿa* (intercession) for a sinful wife once her husband has forgiven her.

The ten virtues and their rewards are as follows:

1. A woman who fulfils her husband's request with regard to something virtuous receives unending blessings from Allah until the day of judgement.
2. A woman who answers her husband's summons and does so with a pleasant countenance ('*manis mukanya*') receives blessings and delights from Allah, who will also light up and enlarge her grave.
3. A woman who puts oil on her husband's hair or rubs scents into his body and does so willingly, so that his friends smell the scents, will be rewarded with the

prayers of the angels of all seven layers of heaven, as well as the prayers of all those who smell her husband (!).

4. A woman who does as her husband commands in the matter of feeding people on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday or a death will be exempted by Allah from questioning by Munkar and Nakir, the angels of death, as well as from the torments of the grave and the agonies of death.
5. A woman who adorns her husband for Friday prayers, Hari Raya, attending a wedding or other virtuous activities will be rewarded by Allah with entry to heaven and kept from the pains of hunger.
6. A woman who asks her husband for permission to pray or fast or give food to people who are fasting or hungry is the leader of all the *houris* in heaven, where she will dwell with her husband.
7. A woman who goes readily when she is summoned to her husband's sleeping place—except if she is menstruating or it is daylight during fasting month—is preserved, with her husband, from the torments of hell and has her prayers fulfilled by Allah.
8. A woman who pours out water for ritual purification for her husband is rewarded with a heavenly palace, has all her sins forgiven by Allah as plentifully as the water that falls from her husband's body, and has blessings recorded by the angels amounting to those of seven martyrs on the field of Uhud.
9. A woman who cares for her in-laws or her husband's guru or orphans or her husband's kin (with her husband's permission) receives rewards from Allah equivalent to manumitting a hundred slaves.
10. A woman who rejects the advances and blandishments of other men, does not steal her husband's property, does not abort the child in her womb, does not profit from usury, is not jealous of her friends, and always gladdens her husband's heart is recorded by Allah as a '*wali Allah*'.

After this portmanteau tenth item, Muḥammad adds that women are not to be jealous if their husband takes further wives or concubines, even if they number a thousand, citing Sura 4:3 from the Qur'an. Here, we have the first instance in the text of a precept clearly derived from the Qur'an, and it is followed by Sura 2:222 ('Women are your fields, go then into your fields as you please'),[24] and further admonitions from Muḥammad to Fāṭima not to succumb to jealousy because 'men are heaven on earth to women because men give pleasure to women'.

Then follow the ten vices of women:

1. Adultery
2. Abortion.
3. Verbal abuse of her husband, either directly to him or to others.[25]
4. Going slowly and/or with a bad grace to her husband's sleeping place when summoned.

5. Theft of her husband's property.
6. Regarding her husband with sour sideways looks because she is in love with another man.
7. Getting angry and cursing her husband when asked for something.
8. When serving her husband, doing so slowly, without speaking to him and with a sour expression.
9. Going anywhere without her husband's permission, and wearing perfume or new clothes or rings, also without her husband's permission and in order to attract other men.
10. [Refusing to] pray or fast or do other obligatory religious acts, such as ritual purification; as well as persisting in doing things her husband dislikes, such as exposing her breasts or refusing to give up bathing naked.

Punishment of these trespasses in hell include being hung upside down, having her lips stretched out a great distance, having molten copper poured into her mouth, being spat upon by all the denizens of hell, and so on. Grotesque as these torments are, the text passes over them rather quickly, at least compared to other works that recount these tortures in sadistic detail. On the whole, Ml. 52 seems keener on the carrot than the stick. The (comparatively) woman-friendly attitude of this manuscript is borne out by the scribe opining that 'women are like bunches of flowers, fragrant and delicious', and that those who pick the flowers ought not to behave like thieves, but should approach with the *bismillah* on their lips, fear towards Allah in their hearts, and using the nine embraces and kisses and the nine 'holds'. However, the text eschews the opportunity to segue into a treatise on erotics.[26] Instead, it continues with Muḥammad exhorting Fāṭima to pass on these teachings, as well as the necessity of reading the Qur'an, and the undertaking of prayer and fasting, to her sons and daughters. The final admonitions reveal the likely profession of the scribe, for much is made of the importance of studying the Qur'an and generously rewarding teachers.

Hikayat Fatima Bersuami *(Leiden Cod.Or. 1953)*

This is a voluminous (413 pages) compendium of religious and didactic texts, once owned by a certain Nyonya Halimah of Kampung Kerukut, Batavia. Two of the other short texts within the collection pertain particularly to women or to marital relations (*Hikayat Martasyiah/Darma Taʿsiah* and *Kitab Jimaʿ*), including detailed instructions on sexual practice. Most remarkable in the context of ʿAlid piety is the defacement of another of the short texts, *Hikayat Nabi Bercukur*. As Wieringa reports, 'the whole story is struck out and several

passages have been blackened with ink [...], in the margins is a statement to account for this (written by a different hand), urging people not to believe this Rafidite story',[27] or, as it appears more forcefully in the original: '*jangan percaya hikayat bercukur ini kerana karangan rafidhi kafir*'.[28] Although the term Rafiḍa/Rawafiḍ has a complex history, it is used to refer to the Twelver Shiʿīs,[29] and for 'deviants' more generally—here, obviously, in a pejorative sense. It is not clear what *Hikayat Nabi Bercukur* might have to do with the Rafiḍa; the text is common enough and seems not to have elsewhere aroused the ire of readers. At a minimum, it can be surmised that a reader of Cod.Or. 1953, some time before the manuscript's accession to a Dutch collection in 1871, objected to its contents and did so in anti-Shiʿa terms. Is this indicative of a sea change in attitudes in the Malay world towards Shiʿism?

Hikayat Fatima Bersuami, in the same volume, seems to take some pains to avoid any suggestion of Shiʿī sympathies. It opens with a prologue listing the best of all of Allah's creations in various categories, and as the best of the Prophet's '*sahabat*', it lists Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthman and ʿAlī, obviously a distinctly Sunnī line-up.[30] The four best women are '*ibu besar*', Sarah, Mary and Fāṭima.[31] As soon as she is described, however, it is evident that we are not dealing with the Fāṭima of the Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections.

In Cod.Or. 1953, *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami*, and the other Malay texts that tell of her, Fāṭima has rather more in common with a heroine of Panji romance. At the age of maturity and of being fit for marriage ('*baligh ya'ni datanglah kepada ketikanya bersuami*'), she is, by Allah's grace, the most beautiful and radiant woman in the world, outshining even the celestial nymphs ('*anak bidadari*', although given the Islamic context, what is probably meant is the *houri*s of paradise). Her fame attracts throngs of royal suitors inflamed with desire. These *raja*s send their messengers to the Prophet to ask for her hand, arguing that since they and all their people have submitted to Islam, they ought to be rewarded with her ('*hendaklah disukakan oleh tuan hamba akan Fāṭima*'). Muḥammad's answer is that her fate is in the hands of God. Meanwhile, ʿAlī is a mendicant ('*fakir tiada dikira-kira*'), who devotes himself to praying to be granted Fāṭima. Again, this characterisation of ʿAlī may not be exclusively Islamic, as it recalls the Indic figure of the ascetic sage mortifying himself to obtain a boon from the gods. His prayers are duly answered when Allah instructs Jibraʾīl and the other angels to begin preparations for the wedding. Jibraʾīl descends to earth with 7,000 angels bearing a tray loaded with jewels and garments for Fāṭima's dowry, to inform Muḥammad that Allah has decreed that she be married to ʿAlī. Indeed, Fāṭima has already been

married to ʿAlī in heaven, with Allah Himself as the officiant, Jibraʾīl as Fāṭima's guardian (*walī*) and Mikaʾīl as ʿAlī's. The Prophet is, needless to say, pleased by this news, which he duly conveys to Fāṭima. She consents to the marriage but refuses the dowry. This information is then conveyed up the chain of command from Muḥammad to Jibraʾīl to Allah, and then back down comes Allah's question about what she desires for her dowry. Fāṭima then reveals her wish: 'all the sins of women who rebel against their husbands from among my Lord's people as my dowry' ('*segala dosa perempuan yang derhaka pada suaminya daripada ummat Tuhanku itu akan isi kahwin hamba*'). This being granted by Allah, Jibraʾīl informs Muḥammad that 'my beloved [that is, the Prophet] provides intercession for all men and as for women believers, Fāṭima provides intercession' ('*kata Jibraʾil adapun yang kasihku itu memberi shafaʿa akan segala laki-laki dan akan umat perempuan itu Fatima memberi shafaʿa*').

The narrative then passes on to married life, which seems to lack the expected bliss. Fāṭima and ʿAlī live together, but ʿAlī is ashamed because he has nothing to give her ('*suatu pun tiada buah-buahan tangan akan Siti Fatima*'). Fāṭima seems to speak little or not at all to him, which rather contradicts the required behaviour for wives in other didactic marriage texts. ʿAlī therefore resolves to go to Syria in search of earnings. After working as a wage labourer there, he receives three unleavened cakes and sets off back to Medina. On his journey, he is accosted by various people who ask for his charity, and so gives away each of the cakes until he arrives at the gates of Medina where he is empty-handed once again. However, a man comes to him and offers him a camel for 1,000 dinars on credit. ʿAlī accepts the offer and soon comes across another man who wants to buy the camel for 3,000 dinars. After concluding this nice bit of business, ʿAlī is told by Muḥammad that the seller of the camel was Jibraʾīl, the buyer was Mikaʾīl, and the dinars came from heaven. Suitably thankful for Allah's generosity, ʿAlī hands over the money to Fāṭima, who distributes it among the poor of Medina. Nothing is said about whether this improved marital relations.

Hikayat Siti Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir Yang Miskin *(PNRI Ml. 42)*[32]

This tale is one of eleven in a manuscript received by the Bataviaasch Genootschap in 1868, and came originally from a Dutch collector resident in Gorontalo, Sulawesi.[33] Among the other narratives are several didactic works for women, including *Hikayat Darma Taʿsia* and *Hikayat Fartana Islam*, as well as *Ceritera*

Tatkala Siti Fatima Hendak Diperisterikan Sayyidina Ali, which is very close to the *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* described above, and *Pengajaran Nabi Muhammad Kepada Sayyidina Ali ibn Abu Talib*.[34] Thus, as with Cod.Or. 1953 just discussed, the volume, as a whole, has a pronounced character. It is heavily didactic, rather elementary in its religious instruction and with a particular slant towards women readers. The ʿAlid orientation is also obvious, though it should be taken into account alongside the Sufi aspect of *Hikayat Si Burung Pingai*, another of its short texts. Overall, it could be said to be typical of a certain stratum of Islamic belief in the archipelago at the time.

The tale runs as follows. A beggar (gender unspecified, but henceforth 'he'), weak from hunger, comes to Fāṭima's house and, addressing her as '*raja* of all women' ('*raja segala perempuan*'), asks for alms. Retiring to her room to think over what she should offer the beggar, Fāṭima suddenly hears a voice speaking Allah's decree: Qurʾan 3:93 ('You shall never be truly righteous until you give in alms what you dearly cherish. The alms you give are known to God').[35] Fāṭima decides that she owns nothing more costly nor more precious to her than a particular garment, adorned with gold and studded with jewels. Out of fear and obedience towards Allah, she gives the garment to the beggar, who is well pleased. The beggar departs with the garment, intending to barter it for 'three or four *gantang*'[36] of rice. The beggar runs into ʿUmar, who recognises Fāṭima's garment and, suspecting the beggar has stolen it, confiscates it. ʿUmar hands it in to the Prophet. No sooner has he done so than the beggar appears, complaining that ʿUmar took away his property 'without cause' ('*dengan tiada suatu sebab*'). The Prophet then went to the mosque and, from the pulpit (*mimbar*), offered the garment for sale. Abū Bakr offers 500 ringgit, but can only pay the next day. ʿUmar offers 700 ringgit, but is also unable to produce the cash on the spot. Then, a certain Siti Muʿawi[37] offers 1000 ringgit in ready money, which the Prophet hands over to the beggar. Muʿawi returns home, selects her own three best garments, each worth 1,000 ringgit, puts them together with the garment she has just bought and instructs a slave to deliver all four to Fāṭima. If Fāṭima accepts the gifts, then Muʿawi will free the slave. Initially, Fāṭima refuses to open the door, as her husband is not at home, but she relents when she hears that the slave will not be freed otherwise. Seeing her garment returned to her, and believing that her act of charity has been rejected by Allah, Fāṭima weeps so bitterly that she is heard by Allah on His throne. Jibraʾīl is then sent down to tell Muḥammad to go to Fāṭima's house to stop her crying and to persuade her to accept the gift by reassuring her that Allah did, in fact, accept it and that the gift of additional garments was His

reward to her. At last, Fāṭima ceases crying, accepts the gift, and the slave is freed into the bargain.

Fatima, sayyidat al-nisāʾ/penghulu segala perempuan

The paragons for Malay Muslims in these texts are Muḥammad, sometimes called '*penghulu segala lelaki*', and Fāṭima, correspondingly '*penghulu segala perempuan*'. The latter formulation is clearly modelled on her Arabic epithet '*sayyidat al-nisā*'', which is attested in the Arabic sources, Sunnī and Shiʿī alike.[38] The Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections tell of how, to console Fāṭima when she heard that he would soon die, Muḥammad assured her that she would be the first of their family to join him in Paradise, and asked: 'Are you not pleased to be the *sayyida* of the women of this people?' Variants of this phrase found in the *ḥadīth* include 'of the women of the Believers', 'of the women of the world' and 'of the women of Paradise'.[39] This would seem to be the ultimate origin of the idea of Fāṭima as head of all women, so routinely encountered in the Malay texts.

The idea of Fāṭima as the provider of *shafāʿa*, or intercession, on behalf of women is also found in relatively early Arabic sources, but these seem to be of a Shiʿī orientation. There is nothing necessarily Shiʿī about the idea of intercession (*shafāʿa*) per se: it is mentioned in the Qurʾan, and the Sunnī *ḥadīth* has related how Muḥammad acted as intercessor for the dead and will do so again on the Day of Judgement.[40] In the Malay texts, Muḥammad is the provider of intercession for men, while Fāṭima plays that role for women. The Shiʿī pairing, in contrast, is ʿAlī and Fāṭima. As Pinault records in the case of contemporary Iran, 'Ḥusayn and Fāṭima will exercise *shafaʿa* on behalf of anyone who remembers the Karbalā' martyrs and honors them during the month of Muharram'.[41] Indeed, for at least one Shiʿī author, Ibn Shahrashub (d.1192), Fāṭima is the provider of salvation for all her followers, male and female alike.[42] The Malay texts, in keeping with what is perhaps a maritime Southeast Asian preoccupation with gendered duality and complementarity, reserve Fāṭima for women.

Nevertheless, the influence of Shiʿī Arabic or Persian narratives about Fāṭima on the Malay texts cannot be discounted. *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami*, in particular, bears some resemblance to the Shiʿī sources consulted by Veccia Vaglieri, including those by Ibn Rustam al-Tabari (d. tenth century), Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (d.1056–7) and Ibn Shahrashub.[43] These include that the marriage of ʿAlī and Fāṭima took place first in heaven, with the officiation of

Allah, Jibraʾīl and Mikaʾīl; the Sunnī *ḥadīth* seem to steer clear of such claims. Yet, here again, the Malay Fāṭima texts fall somewhere between *ḥadīth* and Shiʿī legend. *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* describes the rich gifts which Allah sends, via Jibraʾīl, for Fāṭima's wedding, and which she refuses in exchange for the salvation of sinful women on the Day of Judgement. Her trousseau is also a common topic of the Shiʿī sources, in which it is recorded that as largesse from ʿAlī she is given 'a fifth of the earth, two-thirds of Paradise, and four rivers: the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Nile and the Oxus', not to mention a miraculous tree bearing robes and jewels and shedding missives of light that 'are the safe conducts of the supporters of the ʿAlids'.[44] There seems to be no mention here of giving up these treasures in order to obtain *shafāʿa* for women instead. The divine intervention in ʿAlī's attempts to earn money to give to Fāṭima in *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* may also be ultimately derived from Shiʿī sources, yet, if so, it is still quite a restrained account.

The emphasis in both *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* and *Hikayat Fatima dengan Seorang Fakir* on poverty and charity, exemplified by Fāṭima and ʿAlī, similarly has little in common with the more miraculous powers attributed to them by Shiʿī hagiographies. Finally, the limited measure of Shiʿī influence on the Malay texts may be judged by the fact that all these stories concern Fāṭima's early married life, before the birth of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and the schisms of the community. This is the case, at least, in the Malay texts as we have them today.

ʿAlid piety and 'de-Shiʿitisation'

Given the prominence of Fāṭima in the Malay manuscript tradition, her relative absence from contemporary Malaysian and Indonesian discourses about the ideal Muslim woman is all the more striking. From a literary perspective, it would appear significant that no Fāṭima texts are to be found among the surviving Malay lithographs from the boom years of the early printing industry, centred in Singapore in the late nineteenth century. Interestingly, two of the most frequently republished and therefore, by inference, best-selling lithographs of this period were the didactic tale, *Hikayat Darma Taʿsiah*, which encapsulates much of the same teachings as the texts featuring Fāṭima; and the romance, *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*,[45] which Brakel has shown to be based on a Persian source and characterised as 'aggressively heterodox'.[46] How can this be explained, in light of Brakel's theory of the process of 'de-Shiʿitisation', namely, 'the general tendency of Indonesian Islam to shed its heterodox past

and join the mainstream of orthodox (Sunnī) Islam'?[47] The answer seems to lie in taking a broader view of the process of becoming more 'orthodox'; that is, it is not simply a question of discarding or recasting Shiʿī traits, but a more general rationalisation of Malay Islam.

Thus, on the one hand, it appears that the central figures of Islam, including not only Muḥammad, ʿAlī and Fāṭima, but also ʿĀ'isha, could no longer be represented in stories that have no basis in *ḥadīth*, that is, stories that would have struck reformist readers as blatant fictions no matter how pious the intentions behind them. This is likely to explain the survival of Darma Taʿsiah—a fictitious character about whom it would be no sin to make up stories. The apparent rise in the number of *Hikayat Darma Taʿsiah* texts in the lithographic record may then be seen as a function of the decline of the various Fāṭima texts. On the other hand, the continuing popularity of the lithographic versions of *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* is perhaps enabled by the centuries-long changes 'tending to diminish the Shiʿa impact of the text'[48] that it had already undergone by the late nineteenth century. The text had, by that time, shed any devotional aspects it may once have possessed[49] and had turned into a romance read for pleasure or edification, but certainly not for religious merit. As Mukherjee notes in her contribution to this volume, the mechanisms of textual 'de-Shiʿitisation' in *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* identified by Brakel are: the deletion of Shiʿī elements, the substitution of Sunnī for Shiʿī figures, and the addition of Sunnī material.[50] Can the traces of these processes be seen in the Fāṭima texts?

Notable by their absence are Fāṭima and ʿAlī's sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, who are the founding imāms of Shiʿī Islam. None of the three manuscript examples summarised here so much as mention either of them. A small number of Malay manuscripts do tell of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn and foreshadow their martyrdom. These include a *Hikayat Nabi*, where the Prophet's grandchildren ask him for garments which are then delivered from heaven by Jibraʾīl: a green garment for Ḥusayn, signifying his death by beheading at Karbalāʾ; a red garment for Ḥasan, signifying his death by poisoning; and a white garment for Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya, signifying that he will avenge his brothers.[51] There is also a *Hikayat Hasan dan Husain Tatkala Kanak-Kanak* and *Hikayat Hasan dan Husain Akan Mati*. Crucially, these three texts exist in single exemplars, all of which are strongly influenced by Minangkabau language. Therefore, like *Ceritera dari Tabut*, another single manuscript describing the rituals of the *tabot* ʿ/Ashūrāʾ commemoration, all these texts are closely tied to West Sumatra.[52] As Feener's contribution to this volume shows, *tabot* is specific to West

Sumatran coastal towns and has its origins in migrant South Asian communities there. The more geographically dispersed Malay Fāṭimah texts, in contrast, do not mention Ḥasan, Ḥusayn or Muḥammad Ḥanafiyya.

In the manuscript of *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima* summarised above, for instance, even when it might seem logical to name Ḥasan and Ḥusayn when the Prophet exhorts Fāṭima to 'teach her children, boys and girls, and ensure that they study the Qur'an, pray and fast',[53] the text does not do so. The events of Karbalā' are similarly never referred to. However, it is difficult to judge whether this is due to a programmatic removal of Shiʿī elements that were previously present as part of Sunnī-minded reform, or whether this is due to the very different preoccupations of the Malay texts, which may have meant that those elements were never present in the first place. Certainly, the narrative structures and the themes of the *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima*, *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* and *Hikayat Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir* do not require any mention of the martyrdom of the imāms. The absence of even the most cursory of mentions of Fāṭima as the progenitor of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn could also be explained by the texts' almost total omission of women as mothers. Like other Malay didactic texts for women, the focus is solely on women as wives. The only admonition regarding motherhood is a negative one, that is, not to abort an unborn child. Nothing at all is said about rearing the next generation of Muslims, though this is a topos of contemporary Malay Islamic self-help books.[54]

The substitution of Sunnī for Shiʿī figures does not seem to be much in evidence in the manuscript record. Fāṭima is obviously present, while Khadīja, venerated by Sunnī and Shiʿī alike and ʿĀ'isha, reviled by the Shiʿa, do not often appear. There is some evidence elsewhere in this corpus of a slippage between the ʿAlī and Fāṭima pairing, and the Muḥammad and ʿĀ'isha pairing, but it is difficult to see this as widespread or consistent. For instance, a manuscript of *Hikayat Darma Taʿsia* concludes with a very curious anecdote about Muḥammad and ʿĀ'isha, in which the latter leaves the house without the former's explicit permission and submits to another man's sexual attentions in order to obtain out-of-season mangoes that the Prophet craves.[55] This apparently taboo act is shown to be praiseworthy, because ʿĀ'isha's actions are sincerely intended for the Prophet's benefit. In any event, Muḥammad assures ʿĀ'isha that the old man is not real, but a creation of Muḥammad himself. A structurally identical story, where the sexual transgression of the wife is excused because it was undertaken to cure the illness of her husband, can be found in a Javanese folktale in which Fāṭima sleeps with a doctor in order to

obtain medicine for ʿAlī.[56] There seems to be little rationale for ʿAlī and Fāṭima to appear in one story, and Muḥammad and ʿĀ'isha in another.

Nevertheless, it is striking that even in the manuscript of *Hikayat Darma Taʿsia* featuring the anecdote about ʿĀ'isha and the mangoes, the tale includes a formulaic invocation of Fāṭima. When Darma Taʿsiah and her husband are reconciled, he exclaims that she has been blessed by Allah 'thanks to the teachings of Siti Fāṭima'.[57] Thus within the one text, both ʿĀ'isha and Fāṭima are present as exemplars. Perhaps the presence of ʿĀ'isha is an example of the addition of Sunnī elements, as diagnosed by Brakel. The occasional appearance of the other three caliphs, Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthman, usually anathema to the Shiʿī, could be regarded as Sunnī interpolation. As already mentioned, *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* in Cod.Or. 1953 lists all four of the Sunnī *rāshidūn* as the best of the Prophet's companions. It also, however, notes that the Prophet preferred ʿAlī to ʿUmar as a son-in-law, though this could be a rare example of the Malay texts cleaving to the historical record, since Muḥammad's refusal of ʿUmar and Abū Bakr is recorded by Ibn Sa'd.[58] ʿUmar features in *Hikayat Siti Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir*, and though basically concerned with justice and the welfare of the Prophet's family, he is depicted as rather harsh in his rush to judgement in confiscating the garment Fāṭima had given to the beggar. Alongside ʿUmar, Abū Bakr also features in the tale as an unsuccessful bidder for Fāṭima's garment. Though the other three caliphs do not receive much in the way of special praise in these texts, and ʿAlī is routinely preferred to them, neither is there much in the way of special criticism of them. On the whole, while the Fāṭima texts, like Malay Islam in general, may have been much more heavily influenced by Shiʿism in the past and may carry some residue of this into the more Sunnī present, it is difficult to prove that in their present form they demonstrate much more than a general reverence for the *ahl al-bayt*.

Fāṭima and sexuality

From the perspective of reformist Islam, the most heterodox element of the depiction of Fāṭima in the Malay and other Southeast Asian traditions is likely to be her close association with sexuality. After all, this is neither how she appears in the *ḥadīth* literature nor in Shiʿī hagiography, which, respectively, emphasise her sobriety and austerity, and her sorrowful premonitions of the tragedy that will strike her family. Although she and ʿAlī had five children, she is not depicted as an icon of fertility. Nevertheless, as the only surviving adult

child of Muḥammad, she is perhaps the only figure in the Islamic pantheon on which it is possible to graft Malay–Indonesian preoccupations with the power of female sexuality.[59] An example is the legend of Ken Dedes, the Javanese princess with the 'flaming womb', which provided the title of Barbara Andaya's recent book on women in pre-modern Southeast Asia.[60] Whether this belief is ultimately indigenous or is derived, in part or entirely, from Hindu/Tantric ideas of *shakti*, the female emanating active force of the divine, need not detain us here. Reproduction is obviously important to this concept, given that Ken Dedes' descendants established the Majapahit dynasty, but it is not primary. Sexuality is seen as a force in itself, and one which, unless properly controlled, can have disastrous consequences for the social and cosmic order.

In the Malay manuscript corpus, this association between Fāṭima and sexuality can be most explicitly observed in the papers on sexuality in the present volume and in the Sufi–Tantric esoteric treatises studied by Braginsky. In the *Syair Bahr al-Nisa* and related texts, for instance, 'the "Sea of Women" stands for the female organ' and 'the stations of the Prophet Muhammad's wives and Fatima for five particular *tempat* ("spots") within it'.[61] In another example, Muḥammad's wives, Maymūna, Khadīja, Salāma and ʿĀ'isha, represent water, earth, air and fire respectively, while Fāṭima represents the 'aggregate' of the four elements, because she 'excels all these women'.[62] Fāṭima usually stands at the highest point in these schemas, the point where 'all vessels meet' or 'all the elements are united', and where 'the bliss of [complete] self-abnegation' is to be found.[63] Braginsky theorises that 'both the *yogini* and the *kundalini* are "female forces" which represent the manifestations of the Great Goddess (Shakti), and it is precisely in the form of an Islamised Shakti that Fāṭima appears in [the Javanese] *Nabi Wadon* as well as, more discreetly perhaps, in the [Malay] "Treatise on mystical coition"'.[64] These texts present the (male) adept with a means of achieving spiritual perfection through specific sexual techniques, but what of the role allotted to his female partner? Does the transcendent position of Fāṭima have positive implications for women in Malay religious practice?

With regard to the practice of tantra in India, Doniger writes that 'there is no evidence that actual Tantric women were equals in any sense of the word'.[65] The same could be said of the Malay didactic texts for women, including those with Fāṭima as their exemplar. The Sufi–Tantric esoterica link up with the women's didactic manuals, since the latter insist upon a woman's sexual service toward her husband as a religious obligation, indeed, as her paramount religious obligation. As can be seen in Ml. 52 *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya*

Fatima, a wife who willingly, and with good grace, attends to her husband's sexual demands will save 'both herself and her husband from the torments of hellfire'.[66] Other texts make it even plainer that the relationship of women to their husbands is analogous to that of men to Allah. In *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima* described above, Muḥammad can only intercede on behalf of a sinful woman if and when her husband has forgiven her first. A manuscript of *Hikayat Fartana Islam* has Muḥammad state that if a woman performs the Ramaḍān fast without the express permission of her husband, her fasting will not be accepted by Allah. Meanwhile, if she looks on her husband with a sweet countenance, she will receive blessings greater than if she prayed five times a day and fasted for three months! And, as should be familiar by now, if she has intercourse with her husband 'with a sweet countenance and a glad heart', Allah will allow her to enter heaven.[67] There is no talk of stations on the path of enlightenment or stages of gnosis here. A woman's religious duty is clear: it includes domestic servitude, and especially sexual servitude. The texts for women, including those with Fāṭima as their protagonist, are the quotidian, immanent flip side to the transcendence promised by the esoteric texts for men.

Such a line is indeed heterodox from the perspective of reformist Islam as espoused by *dakwa* movements in present-day Malaysia and Indonesia, according to which *muslim* and *muslima* are equal before the eyes of God and equally obliged to perform the same basic individual religious duties (*farḍu ʿain*). The elevation of service to the husband above service to Allah, and the requirement that a woman obtains the permission of her husband to carry out the obligations of prayer and fasting, might well be regarded as downright un-Islamic, indeed, correctly so if these beliefs arise from a Tantric undercurrent! By the beginning of the twentieth century, such reformist or modernist ideas were already in the air. In her study of the *Bihishti Zewar*, an Urdu didactic manual for women written by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi at the turn of the century, Metcalf argues that the text's 'overriding focus' is 'to delineate the characteristics of a reformist temperament: moderate in all things, unfailingly self-controlled, minimally engaged in social relations, and wholly absorbed in fulfilment of the religious law. There is no effort to differentiate male and female in this model.'[68] Though it advocates a hierarchy that ranks men over women, the *Bihishti Zewar* does not exclude women from the domain of religious practice, as the older Malay didactic texts do. In the Malay tradition itself, modernising ideas are at work in Raja Ali Haji of Penyengat's didactic poem for women, *Syair Siti Sianah*, which, though very much exercised by

issues of sexuality and wifely obedience, nevertheless enjoins upon women's religious obligations, in addition to tending to their husbands.[69] Interestingly, Raja Ali Haji's reformist agenda is perhaps also detectable in the fact that the entire poem of almost 600 stanzas is populated entirely by fictitious female characters, with no mention at all of Fāṭima.

However, the religio-didactic text that provides perhaps the greatest scope for female agency is the one that has the most archaic elements, that is, *Hikayat Si Burung Pingai*. A version of this is included in PNRI Ml. 42—the anthology from Sulawesi that also contains *Hikayat Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir* summarised above. As Braginsky notes, the *pingai* bird of the title is a Sufi, and probably also pre-Islamic Malay–Indonesian, symbol of the soul.[70] This melange of influences is also reflected in the poem's combination of quotations from the works of the foundational Malay Sufi, Ḥamza Fanṣūrī, with 'folkloric formulae derived, in particular, from shamanic tradition'.[71] Four of the Prophet's wives, as well as Fāṭima, figure prominently in *Hikayat Si Burung Pingai*, but in no form recognisable from the mainstream Muslim sources. Instead, the women swing on a swing, which Braginsky has shown to be an echo of a shamanistic ritual intended to summon the spirits. In the Sufi context, the swinging is intended to induce the spiritual ecstasy of the union of the soul with the divine.[72] Although it could be argued that there is a sexual dimension to this allegory (given the metaphor of adorning the bridegroom and the mere presence of Fāṭima and of the Prophet's four wives, both of which point to texts like *Syair Bahr al-Nisa*), the female role here is more than simply the amanuensis of the male adept. However, Fāṭima is again present here, it seems, as a substitute for another woman—the female shaman of the pre-Islamic ritual—just as in *Syair Bahr al-Nisa*, where she is a substitute for the Tantric goddess.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that an ʿAlid orientation—that is, a special reverence for the members of the Prophet's family—is found in the Malay Fāṭima texts, which may once have been more strongly Shiʿa in the true sense. Perhaps the most convincing answer to the question of 'why Fāṭima' is also the simplest: she is the woman who links the two most important figures in Malay Islam of the nineteenth century and earlier—Muḥammad and ʿAlī. She is also the woman who has ensured the survival of the Prophet's lineage. Unlike ʿĀ'isha on the Sunnī side and Zaynab on the Shiʿī side, Fāṭima in the Malay texts could be

made to represent not only Sunnī and Shiʿī, but also Sufi and older values. Fāṭima in the Malay manuscript tradition is also capable of representing a range of older, non-Islamic female religious figures. *Hikayat Si Burung Pingai* amalgamates Sufi and shamanic elements with the figure of Fāṭima; *Syair Bahr al-Nisa* and its ilk associate her with Tantric practices; *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* and *Hikayat Fatima Dengan Seorang Fakir* include some aspects of Shiʿī hagiography and Sunnī *ḥadīth*; and *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima* mixes indigenous mores with a basic Islamic orthopraxy. Such eclecticism is not surprising in Malay religiosity; instead of succeeding one another in a convenient chronology, influences that enter the culture at various times coexist and intermingle. This is perhaps particularly the case with texts like the didactic works for women, which are closer to village folk practice than to scholarly circles attached to royal courts or mosques. The Fāṭima texts from the nineteenth century reflect a cultural moment, albeit a long and amorphously delineated one, during which there seems to have been a concerted attempt to equate the religious role of female Muslims with that of compliant wives.

7

ʿALID PIETY IN BUGIS TEXTS ON PROPER SEXUAL ARTS

*Faried F. Saenong**

ʿAlid piety is evident in various aspects of the religious life of Muslims in Southeast Asia as well as across the world. It is clearly distinguishable from Shiʿism, which is characterised by a set of well-defined theological, legal and ritual practices. Shifting the geographic compass eastwards, therefore, this chapter introduces the presence of ʿAlid piety in South Sulawesi, focusing on one specific literary tradition, that of some Bugis texts offering advice to newly-wed couples, which held ʿAlī and Fāṭima as the epitome of the perfect Muslim couple.

These works of literature, however, are only one manifestation of a substratum of ʿAlid piety that still finds expression under different forms in contemporary South Sulawesi. To name a few, a Sayyid group in Cikoang (Takalar, South Sulawesi) preserves its own story of how Islam had come to the area, arguing that the main *dāʿī* in the seventeenth century had been Sayyid Jalalu-

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din Aidid (d.1693), a descendant of an Iraqi exiled to Aceh. Christian Pelras has already argued that Jalaludin Aidid was characterised by strong Shiʿī influence,[1] and probably this group of *sayyids*' inclination to Sufism, their commitment to the idea of *nūr Muḥammad*, and the way they celebrate the birth of the Prophet, all support the idea of an important connection with a tradition of ʿAlid devotion.[2] In the Moluccas, some Muslims believe that Islam was brought to their islands by *walī*s who had travelled from Gujarāt and Baghdād (Datu Maulana), both deemed to be, at least by Bartels and Marcinkowski, of 'Shiʿī origin'.[3]

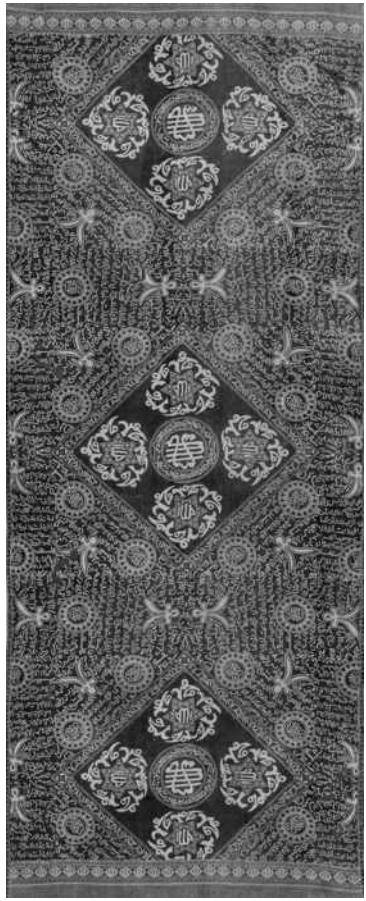


Fig. 7.1: The Kain in the National Gallery of Australia (courtesy NGA 2011)

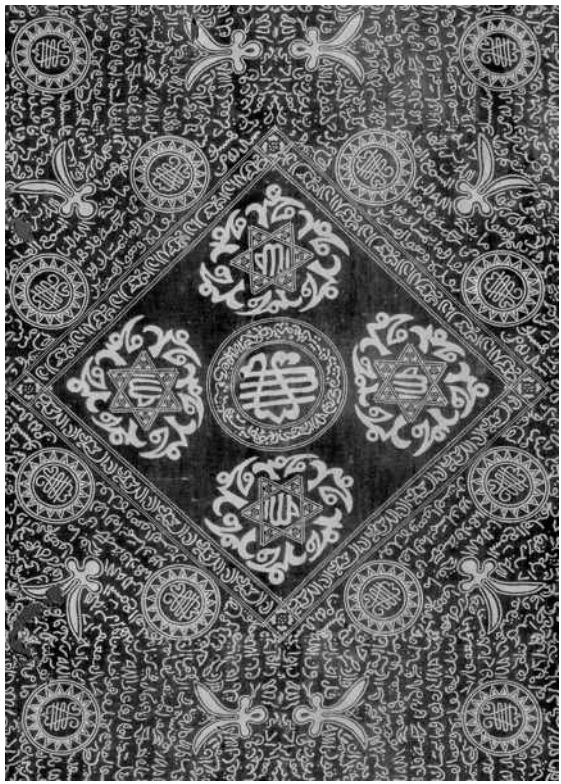


Fig. 7.2: The Kain in the National Gallery of Australia (courtesy NGA 2011)—detail

Bantaeng local traditions relate that a famous Islamic preacher, active in the eighteenth century, had come from Iraq and belonged to the family of Tun Abdul Gani. Even today, one of his descendants holds that Shaykh Muḥammad Jaʿfar had travelled from Iraq to look for his father, Tun Abdul Gani, stopping in several ports including Bima and Sumbawa before eventually finding him in Bantaeng. His legacy includes the commemoration of ʿĀshūrā during *Muḥarram*.[4] Yet this is not an isolated case, and different families commemorate the martyrdom in different ways. Some, in Pangkep, celebrate the festival by making the famous *Jepeˀ Syura* (ʿĀshūrā porridge)—which is also found in Aceh as *Kanji Asyura*, and in Java as *Bubur Sura*—decorating it with slices of eggs, fish and shrimp; as it is made of seven ingredients, some call it 'porridge of seven kinds'.[5] In Mamala Hitu there is still a ceremony called *Perang*

Sapu Lidi, which has been interpreted as an adaptation of ʿĀshūrā observances,[6] but in more general terms *Muḥarram* is seen as an unlucky month.

Some indication of the importance of ʿAlī in the Islamic tradition of South Sulawesi is given also by the material culture. In Canberra, for example, the only textile at the National Gallery of Australia depicting ʿAlī is a *batik* crafted on the north coast of Java but retrieved from a Bugis family. The cloth, worn on special occasions such as circumcisions, weddings and funerals, is imprinted with Arabic calligraphy reproducing the names of Allah, Muḥammad, some verses of the Qurʾan,[7] and most interestingly the image of ʿAlī's sword, the double-bladed *Dhūʾl-fiqār*. These elements are found in traditions of ʿAlid piety well-established on the North Java coast.

ʿAlid piety and literature in Eastern Indonesia

Alongside more widely-known texts associated with the pre-modern literary traditions of China, India and various parts of the Muslim world,[8] Southeast Asia has its own legacy of sexual arts manuals. In Java, an interesting example is represented by the *Serat Nitimani*, whilst pre-modern Malay literature is dotted with texts on the 'knowledge of women' (*ʿilm al-nisā*).[9] Literary traditions in the Bugis language of South Sulawesi include texts of instruction and advice to newly-wed couples on the art of intercourse. One striking aspect of such texts is the prominent role assumed by ʿAlī and Fāṭima as 'typological' figures of such manuals.

As discussed in previous chapters, a number of surviving Malay Islamic literary works contain references to the *ahl al-bayt*; these were at times considered references to 'Shiʿism',[10] but broader trends of ʿAlid piety are also widely diffused across Muslim literatures. These texts range from discussions of the mystical light of Muḥammad (*nūr Muḥammad*), the possibility of his family members inheriting such quality, and various traditions concerning the figures of ʿAlī and Fāṭima.

The South Sulawesi manuscripts studied by Matthes in the late nineteenth century, and Pelras in more recent times, bear witness to the local transformations of these texts in the Bugis and Makassarese literary traditions.[11] For example, the *Tamimoe-d-Dari* is a Makassarese adaptation of *Hikayat Tamim al-Dari*,[12] the story of this Companion of the Prophet who received spiritual guidance not from ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d.644), but from ʿAlī instead. The *Sêhe-Maradāng*[13] is the Makassarese version of *Hikayat Sjai Mardan*,[14] which contains the story of the *nūr Muḥammad*. Stories of the heroic victorious

warrior ideal embodied by ʿAlī, often also called the 'tiger of Allāh'[15]—are occasionally mentioned in Makassarese epics. The *Raja-Hindi* is one of these regional versions of the *Hikayat Raja Khandak*, wherein the 'King of Khandak' and his son 'Badar' were killed at the hands of ʿAlī.[16] Another example is the Makassarese epic of *Raja Khaybar*, an adaptation of the *Hikayat Raja Khaybar*, in which ʿAlī figures prominently.[17]

In some parts of South Sulawesi, traditions require the groom, in front of the imām, to beat several rattan sticks twelve times to symbolise the commemoration of the twelve Shiʿī imams; also during the wedding, since the groom and bride are seen as representing ʿAlī and Fāṭima, some literary traditions of this region also create a bridge between marital relations and the Family of the Prophet. A Bugis adaptation of *Hikayat Darma Tasiah*, for example, tells stories of virtuous women faithful to their husbands who bear the names of Ḥasan, Ḥusayn and Muḥammad al-Hanafiya in adapted Bugis forms.[18] Last but not least, the story of the marriage of ʿAlī and Fāṭima also has a Makassarese edition, the *Hikayat Ali Kawin*.[19]

Assikalaibinéng: Bugis wisdom of sexual arts

'*Al-salāmu ʿalaykum yā bāb al-raḥma*' ('Peace be upon to you, O gate of blessing'), '*wa ʿalaykum salām ya ṣādiq al-amīn*' ('And peace be upon to you, O wholehearted, faithful man'). In Bugis and Makassarese society, these are well-known greetings exchanged between husband and wife when initiating intercourse. In South Sulawesi, manuals for marital sexual relationship are called *assikalaibinéng* (Bugis) or *passikalabiniang* (Makassarese), and these describe, in great detail, how the couple should properly approach each other in a series of ritual actions accompanied by formulaic dialogue. In this chapter I analyse these manuscripts, here referred to as *lontara*, as one manifestation of ʿAlid piety in the Bugis Islamic tradition, as ʿAlī and Fāṭima are consistently used to symbolise the ideal husband and wife.

Assikalaibinéng contains basic Bugis words: *'lai'* (husband or man) and *'binè'* (wife or woman), thus forming the compound word *'laibinè'* (husband–wife); the additions of the prefixes *'a-si-ka'* (mutual, or co-) and a suffix *'ng'* construct a new noun meaning 'matters of husband–wife-ness'. Thus, *assikalaibinéng* semantically and technically denotes knowledge or ethics of normative sexual relations between husband and wife. Other texts use slightly different Bugis terms, but hold the same meaning (*assikalaibinéngeng, akkalabinéngeng* or *allaibinéngeng*) and these are substantially identical to their Makassarese counterpart, *passikalabiniang*.

As mentioned at the opening of this chapter, texts on the sexual arts are well known in many pre-modern literary traditions. The primary catalogue of manuscripts from South Sulawesi contains notes on 44 existing Bugis and Makassarese texts of this type under the designation *assikalaibinéng/passikalabiniang*.[20] Among these, 28 Bugis texts are written in *lontara* script, and 16 Makassarese texts are in *sulapa eppaq*, *jangang-jangang* and *serang* (Arab) scripts. Of these 28 Bugis texts, however, only 17 have survived and are still partially legible.[21]

In recent years at least three studies have addressed these texts, and it is these transliterations and translations that I primarily use in this analysis. The work by Idrus examined the *Lontara Daramatasia*, looking at scattered parts of seven manuscripts and integrating the textual analysis with an ethnographic research, which confirmed that these traditions are still practised.[22] The second study is by Alang, who has grounded his work on nine texts chosen at random and three other manuscripts, which I have reproduced in the Appendix at the end of this chapter (see last three texts in Appendix 1). This work focuses on content analysis and free exploration of the texts, rather than the more conventional philological study of manuscripts.[23] The third study, by Hadrawi, is an extensive philological research of one core text and seven other complementary ones.[24] As a philological study, his first publication focused on the transliteration and translation of three manuscripts (MS 33/40, 45/23, 48/18), which are then compared with other manuscripts.

These *lontara* texts deal with the sexual arts in explicit detail, including discussions of foreplay, intercourse and finishing touches, at the same time indicating the appropriate *doa* (or prayers) to be uttered at particular points. All the activities described—complemented with the text of prayers in Arabic, Bugis or Makassarese—are accompanied by guidance on how to conceive a boy or a girl child, and on how to ensure an easy delivery, as well as discussions of 'dry sperm', coitus interruptus and mystical esotericism (*nikah batin*). These specific guides to practice are sometimes also combined with more general advice on how to achieve an everlasting marital relationship, or even how to maintain one's youth.

Personifications of Muslim figures and names are an important part of these texts, as represented by an illustration of the *tudangenna anaʿ loloé* (the throne of the baby, or womb) accompanied by the Arabic words 'Allah' and 'Muḥammad' above and below the illustration, respectively. Allegorically, this image represents the mystical understanding by the wife of her own husband, as corresponding to the nature of Allah, and vice versa; this, then, represents the idea of *fanā'*, or ecstasy, common among Sufis.[25]

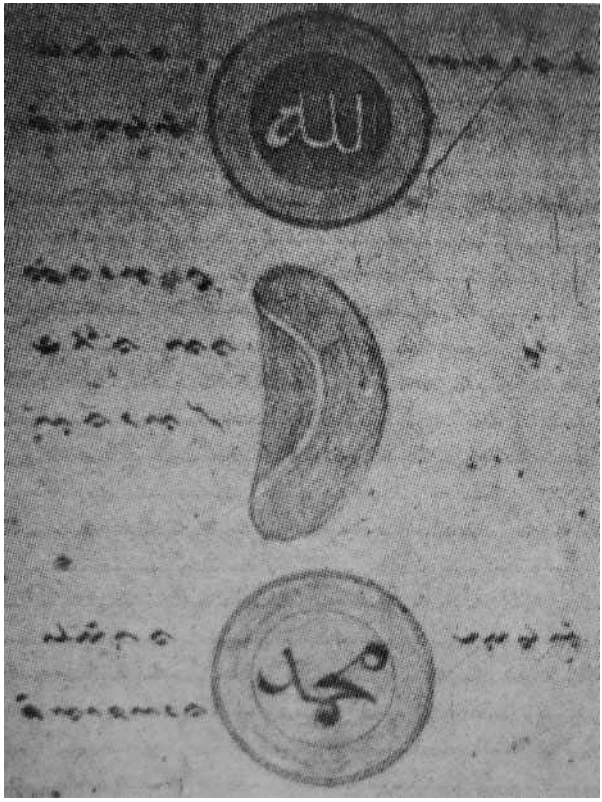


Fig. 7.3: Illustration of womb in MS 26/13 (courtesy Ininnawa 2009)

ʿAlī and Fāṭima

The marriage of Fāṭima to ʿAlī contributed to the production of a rich body of literature, in Muslim tradition, including narratives about the marriage of ʿAlī and Fāṭima. One such narrative centres on an episode describing ʿAlī's request for approval to have a second wife. According to the tale, when Fāṭima heard her husband's request, an egg which was in her hand suddenly cooked—a representation of her rage and refusal; a position seconded by the Prophet himself who, according to some traditions, would have forced ʿAlī to divorce Fāṭima if he had insisted on going ahead with such plans.

As Fāṭima often appears as the perfect wife and daughter, ʿAlī and Fāṭima are frequently used to epitomise the perfect Muslim couple; advisable sexual

practices for married couples were thus explained through tales of ʿAlī and Fāṭima's lives. In *lontara* MS 45/23 and MS 48/18, for example, these practices are presented as an important part of the couple's life, to the extent that one section of MS 45/23 recounts how Fāṭima told ʿAlī that he had not delivered to her the 'goods entrusted by Allah'. Ashamed by his failure and open to advice, Fāṭima replied that he should visit the Prophet to learn about the *assikalaibinéng*,[26] thus affirming that it had been Muḥammad who had transmitted the privileged knowledge of the *assikalaibinéng* to ʿAlī.[27] The text explicitly describes how Muḥammad transferred this knowledge to ʿAlī and how he received it. It discusses how he had asked ʿAlī to pick a jackfruit to take home for Fāṭima, as one of the secrets of wooing women was to give them what they like. The Prophet then showed ʿAlī a set of texts describing particular sexual practices. ʿAlī wanted to write it down, but the Prophet asked him to store it in his heart. The Prophet then explained to him the origins of sperm, the stages of intercourse, and other related matters.

Some *lontara*s, including MS 45/23 and MS 48/18, use sobriquets of both ʿAlī and Fāṭima in greetings used at the beginning of intercourse. ʿAlī is called *sādiq al-amīn* (wholehearted faithful man), while Fāṭima is the *bāb al-raḥma* (gate of blessing). Greetings in this sense are salutations of husband and wife. The husband greets '*assalamu ʿalaikung ya baburrahmah*' *[al-salām ʿalaykum yā bāb al-raḥma]* ('peace is upon to you, O, the gate of blessing'), and the wife welcomes '*wa ʿalaykumussalam ya sadiqul amin*' *[wa ʿalaykum al-salām yā sādiq al-amīn]* ('and peace is upon to you too, O, the wholehearted faithful man').[28] Before that, there is a magical formula to be recited before intercourse, as the husband holds his wife's hand: *aslmu alaiku, ai ali mkrw, ptim rikrw* ('Peace is upon you, ʿAlī holds, Fāṭima is being held').[29]

In the *lontara* texts mentioned above, the husband is represented by ʿAlī and the wife by Fāṭima, but occasionally they can also be symbolised by the Arabic letters '*alif*' and '*bā*' respectively, bringing forward a unique hermeneutical understanding of these letters. *Lontara* MS 45/23 presents details of a foreplay stage: when husband and wife are about to make love, he should greet her '*al-salām ʿalaykum yā bāb al-raḥma*', and say, 'I am *Alif* stand up on the body of Fāṭima'. He should recite then, 'The Prophet Muḥammad spreads out in the feeling of Fāṭima'. The husband then moves his hand to her belly button, and recites, 'The Prophet Adam spreads out in Fāṭima's belly button', as well as 'God, open up for me the gate of Fāṭima's feeling, and blossom up Fāṭima's feeling'. When the husband touches her vagina, the wife should welcome him, '*wa ʿalaykum al-salām yā sādiq al-amīn*', which means 'give way to the essence of ʿAlī to enter and bow in the body of the essence of Fāṭima'. The husband

then says, 'O Fāṭima, open up the jasmine flower (vagina) so the *Lasasuna* (penis) can get in'.[30] In addition, MS 48/18 noticeably confirms this interpretation by referring to the reader (husband) as *'alif'* and the wife as *'ba'*.[31]

In *Lontara Cenninrara* (MS 47/18), ʿAlī and Fāṭima appear in a magic formula that is supposed to be uttered by the wife, in which ʿAlī and Fāṭima are referred to as exemplary practitioners of foreplay. The formula is:

ᨕᨗᨈᨘᨈᨘ ᨊᨚᨕᨗ ᨊᨗᨆᨗᨄ ᨘᨚᨕ
ᨊᨄᨗ ᨕᨊ ᨕᨗᨈ ᨕᨗᨈ ᨅᨚᨈᨘᨈᨗ
ᨊᨕᨄ ᨈᨚᨈᨘᨚᨕᨕᨗ ᨚ ᨈᨘᨅ ᨊᨚᨊ

(Under my navel is the spot of pleasure,
gently stimulate around the hairs of *lennalanu* [vagina],
just like that experienced by ʿAlī and Fāṭima.)

MS 26/13 offers a slightly different formula, which is to be recited by the husband just before intercourse:

ᨄᨘᨘᨊ ᨊᨚᨊ, ᨄᨘᨘ ᨄᨚ ᨈᨘᨅ,
ᨈᨚᨕᨄᨗᨊᨚ ᨈᨘᨘᨈᨗᨊ ᨕᨚ ᨈᨘᨘᨕᨄᨗᨕ, ᨈᨊᨘᨘᨈ ᨈᨘᨅ ᨕᨚ ᨈᨘᨘᨕᨄᨗᨊ,
ᨈᨘᨘᨗᨈᨕᨚ ᨘᨘᨚᨕᨚ ᨊᨚᨊ, ᨚᨈᨗᨊ ᨈᨘᨅ,
ᨕᨕᨗ ᨅᨄᨘᨘᨅᨚᨄᨘᨘᨈ

(You are Fāṭima, I am ʿAlī,
I require the letter ʿAlīf in my body, the text Allah in your body,
Open, please, the door of Fāṭima, so that ʿAlī may enter,
In the blessing of Allah.)

The names of ʿAlī and Fāṭima are clearly mentioned also in other places, although with particular purposes. *Lontara* MS 48/18, for example, uses their names as parts of prayers or magical formulae recited just before intercourse. The *lontara* says:

ᨈᨚ ᨗᨑ ᨚᨊᨄᨗᨚ ᨕᨄᨗ ᨘᨘᨚᨈᨚ ᨊᨚᨊ

(O Wudi, open for me the white belt of Fāṭima)[32]

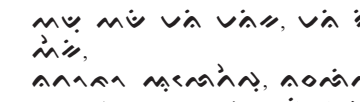
or:

ᨈᨚᨅ ᨚᨈᨚᨅ ᨘᨕᨕᨘᨚᨊᨗ, ᨘᨚᨚᨊ ᨘᨊᨄᨗᨑ, ᨈᨚᨅ ᨘᨗᨑᨊᨈᨗ, ᨊᨚᨊ
ᨚᨕᨘᨘᨚᨅ

(Allah who has the relationship, Muḥammad who feels it,
ʿAlī who does, Fāṭima who accepts it.)[33]

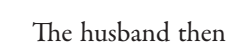
ʿAlī and Fāṭima are also present in the post-intercourse rite. These *lontara* offer advice to the couple on how they can rest and refresh themselves, as well as how they can stay young, especially the women. It mentions that one way

to keep young is to return the sperm and ovum to their place: the husband picks the vaginal liquid with his finger, then drops it in his palm, and mixes it with his sperm taken from the well of *kalkawthar* (his penis). He then stirs it up with his middle finger and recites:



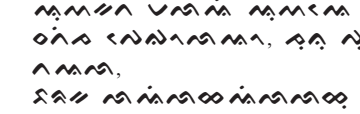
(*Waddu wadi mani manikang*, the sperm is being returned, is light that returns,
so is light that is headed forward,
covered by the full moon, covered by the light of Muḥammad,
go up while being luminous in the face of Fāṭima, stuck in her body,
spread in her heart, settle in her soul, using you will not die nor get old,
will forever stay young, *kun fa-yakūn*.)[34]

The husband then spreads or smears the mixture on specific spots of her body. When it reaches her breast, he recites:



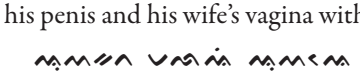
(*a-i-u, junub* (impurity) of ʿAlī, is *istinjā'* (purification) of Fāṭima)[35]

There is another formula uttered just after intercourse. *Lontara* MS 45/23 explains that the husband is supposed to clean the vagina with his right hand and then recite:



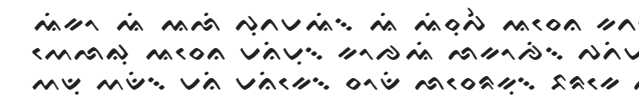
(I intentionally take the boiled water of ʿAlī and Fāṭima,
Istinjā' (purification) goes somewhere, and *junub* (impurity) remains unchanged
as prescribed by Allāh Ta'ālā,
Barakka no God but Allāh, Muḥammad the Messenger of Allāh.)[36]

Another prayer containing the names of ʿAlī and Fāṭima is also recited during the *mandi junub* (shower for purification), which is to be performed just after intercourse and on which occasion the husband is supposed to rub his penis and his wife's vagina with his right hand:



(I intend to take the boiled water of ʿAlī and Fāṭima, *satinja* (purification) makes the washing better, where to go to and where to come from, return to your place.)[37]

These manuscripts also present some illustrations of sexual organs, and manuscripts of this kind are called *Lontara Sebbo'* (lit. '*Lontara* of the Hole'). Interestingly, they are enriched with names of several Muslim figures, including ʿAlī and Fāṭima. As an example, MS 26/13 presents an illustration of a vagina complete with Bugis *lontara* scripts both on the left and right sides of the image.



(You, ʿAlī, penetrate! Yusuf is the name of the penis,
Welagu is the name of your sperm, stir the *lakoci* (vagina) up! Fāṭima is being stubbed, *waddu wadi, mani manikeng*, the liquid of my penetration is blessed, *lailaha illa Allah*.)

In this regard, the *Lontara Daramatasia* is also of interest, as it contains references to other important ʿAlid figures as well. This *lontara* is the Bugis adaptation of the Malay *Darma Tasia* which has been adapted to some vernacu-

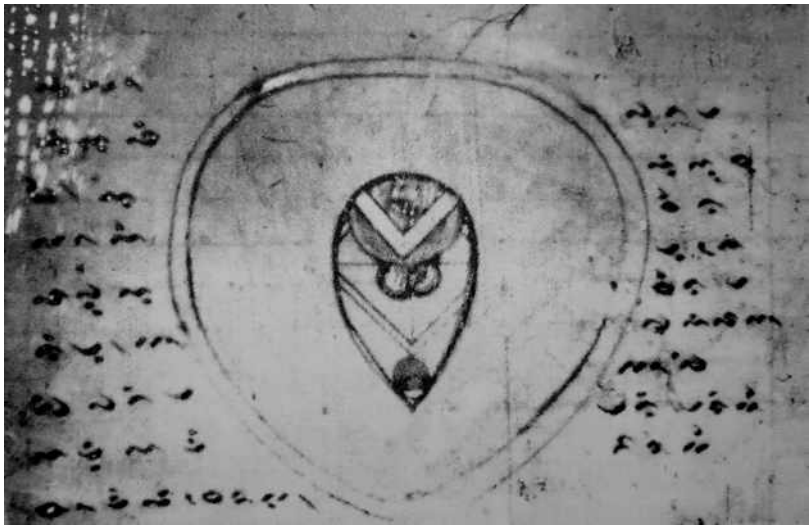


Fig. 7.4: Illustration of vagina in MS 26/13 (courtesy Ininnawa 2009 and Idrus 2003)

lar languages such as Acehnese (*Hikayat Inong*) and Javanese (*Murtasiyah*).[38] The manuscript provides stories of a certain Daramatasia, a heroine and a pious woman. A section of this text retells a conversation between Daramatasia and the Three Brothers (Hasang, Huseng and Ahemade). This is a local adaptation of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, sons of ʿAlī through Fāṭima, and Aḥmad or Muḥammad al-Hanafiya, son of ʿAlī through Khawla. The text explains that the Three Brothers came to propose to Daramatasia on the seventh day after the death of her husband, *Saéhe biʾl-Maʿrupi*. As a test, she asked them: 'how great is the desire of a man for woman, and of a woman for a man?'[39] Hasang and Huseng failed to answer and eventually left her, but Ahemade enlightened her with his explanation, resulting in her taking Ahemade as her next husband. According to Idrus, this part of the conversation is absent in other versions of *Daramatasia* across the archipelago.[40]

In addition to Fāṭima, other important Muslim women are also present in these manuscripts. During intercourse, the position of the wife in relation to the particular points of a compass has been associated with the wives of the Prophet. When the wife lies facing west, this is associated with Khadīja; the south, with ʿĀʾisha; and the east, with Umm Salāma.[41] Another example is an illustration of a vagina in which each part has been named after a great female figure of early Islam, such as Khadīja (Hatijah), ʿĀʾisha (Aisyah), Umm Salāma (Salamah) and Maymūna (Maemunah)—the names of the wives of the Prophet spelt according to local Bugis pronunciation. Following Brakel's account of 'de-Shiʿitisation' of Islamic literature,[42] the presence of these names might be regarded as part of a broader mechanism of 'substitution' and 'addition' aimed at reducing or neutralising the influence of Shiʿism in these manuscripts. The presence of Fāṭima in these *assikalaibinéng* manuscripts, however, is still much more dominant than any other figures.

Knowledge transmission

Knowledge of *assikalaibinéng* has been disseminated in South Sulawesi through several patterns. Initially, this local Islamic knowledge of sex was only circulated among followers of the Khalwatiya Sufi order, and was mainly propagated here[43] by Shaykh Yūsuf al-Maqassarī (1627–99) and Shaykh Abdullah (nineteenth century)[44] in the circles of the Khalwatiya-Yūsuf and Khalwatiya-Sammān, respectively. As the early practitioners of these sexual arts were also local Sufis, knowledge of *assikalaibinéng* came also to be referenced as *tasawupe allaibinéngengngé* or 'Sufism of husband and wife'. The

followers of both Sufi orders then propagated this knowledge around their residences. In addition to *tasawwuf* practitioners, this knowledge also circulated among elites and local nobles. Hadrawi argued that patterns of ownership of and access to *assikalaibinéng* manuscripts reflected social hierarchies of religious leadership and the local nobility.[45]

It should be noted that these traditions of knowledge about sexual relations circulates within Bugis society not only through texts, but also through oral tradition, which has been the main medium of transmission since early times. During my ethnographic fieldwork in Bantaeng, I frequently encountered such patterns of transmission, from the older to the younger generations, through at least three different actors with three different channels. What makes these actors indistinguishable is the content of the knowledge and the time of transmission, which usually happens when the couple is about to get married. The three channels mentioned above are initiated through the male line (paternal or maternal uncle), a male or female *indoʾ botting* (traditional wedding organiser), and a local *to macca* ('wise person'). The *indoʾ botting* is in charge of managing the cultural or traditional aspects of the wedding, while the *to macca* is a source of local knowledge. The *to macca* is not to be confused with a *shaman*, although they do share some characteristics, both being the individuals from whom members of society seek advice on everyday problems. The first two channels require an active role on the side of either the parents or the *indoʾ botting*, who would have to educate their son or client, respectively, before the wedding. The third channel of transmission would involve a visit to the local *to macca* by the husband-to-be, for advice on married life.

Haji Badaʾ Amin is a famous male *indoʾ botting* in Tompubulu (Bantaeng) and some areas of Bulukumba, and his services are very often sought after by local residents who intend to get married. As a male *indoʾ botting*, he is in charge of giving all necessary information and passing knowledge to the husband-to-be. Due to his close relationship with the population, this *indoʾ botting* of Bugis origin occasionally also gave services in Makassar, the capital of the province. One of his duties is to remind the husband-to-be of the basic aspects of Islamic law, yet the most important thing is instructing the husband-to-be on how to re-purify himself (*ṭahāra*), and it is in this context that the *assikalaibinéng* knowledge is passed on. This *ṭahāra* includes the rituals of *jeʾne* (lit., water), *wudūʾ* (ablution with water), *tayammum* (ablution with dust), *istinjāʾ* (cleaning with stones after defecating and urinating) and *mandi junub* (*ghusl janāba*, or major ablution). As the latter has to be performed after intercourse, it is at this point that Hajī Badaʾ Amīn starts transmitting that knowledge.

Another channel of transmission of such knowledge is the *to macca*. In Tompubulu, husbands-to-be used to visit the local *to macca* to ask for advice. During my research, I accompanied one local resident on his pre-marital visit, where Daeng Soreq, the local *to macca* in Patabung, carefully elucidated the importance of the mystical dimensions of marriage, centred on the unity of the souls of the husband and wife. His description of how to achieve this union, as well as most of his advice on sexual intercourse, correspond to the contents of the *assikalaibinéng* texts examined in this chapter, showing the continuing relevance and contemporary continuities of these long-established textual traditions of ʿAlid piety in South Sulawesi.

APPENDIX

Bugis Texts/Manuscripts of Sexual Arts in Katalog Induk[46]

No	*Roll/ Code*	*Title*	*Language/Script*	*Date (Century)*	*Page/Owner (Residence)*
01	0/22	Prayers for Husband and Wife	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		13pp./H. Bakri (Wajo)
02	11/18	Diary Notes	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		146pp./ H. Ahmad
03	22/33	Religious Chrestomathy	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic		24pp./ M. A. Hasan (Bone)
04	26/13	Science of Sufi Order	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Bugis/*Serang* Arabic		154pp./I. Tiwi (Makassar)
05	32/8	Prayers and Salawat	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic		25pp./Hamzah (Barru)
06	33/9	Sufi Order and Family	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		28pp./H. Badawi (Barru)
07	33/18	Mystical Marriage and Body Signs	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		20pp./H. Badawi (Barru)
08	33/32	Prayers and Manual for Husband and Wife	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		45pp./(Makassar)
09	33/40	Religious Chrestomathy and Mystical Marriage	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		103pp./M. Thahir (Tanrutedong-Sidrap)

10	35/15	Chrestomathy of Culture	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab	XX	52pp./Amiruddin (Makassar)
11	45/23	*LontaraLontara* Chrestomathy	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		350pp./ H. Abdullah K. (Watampone)
12	45/27	*Fiqh* (Islamic Law)	Makassar/ LontaraLontara Makassar/*Serang* Arabic/Arab		44pp./Dg. Gassing (Selayar)
13	46/24	Prayers and *Assikalaibinéngeng*	Bugis/LontaraLontara Arabic/Arab		52pp./M. Said (Luwu)
14	47/18	*Cenninrara* (Sweater)	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		26pp./A. Anton (Palopo)
15	48/5	Prayers of Sufi Order *Sekke' Rupa*	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		40pp./Nira Ambe'na Baso (Luwu)
16	48/18	Chrestomathy of Religion and Culture	Bugis/ LontaraLontara	XVIII	108pp./Nira Ambe'na Baso (Luwu)
17	52/24	Chrestomathy of Culture and Religion	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		28pp./M. Rahman (Makassar)
18	56/23	Chrestomathy of Religion and Culture	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		64pp./M. Saleh Mullia (Bulukumba)
19	60/26	Religious Chrestomathy	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		39pp./Pudjananti (Donggala)
20	69/21	*Akkalaibinéngeng Lontara*	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		8pp./Rahmawati Tajuddin (Makassar)
21	69/29	*Allaibinéngeng Lontara*	Bugis/Lontara-Lontara Arabic/Arab		66pp./Muh. Ali (Bone)
22		Husband–wife Sexual Manners	Bugis/ LontaraLontara	XX	Halida Dg. Sibo (Takalar)
23		*Pakkalibiniang Lontara*	Makassar/ LontaraLontara	XX	Hamida Dg. Raja (Takalar
24		*Akkalabinéang Lontara*	Bugis/ LontaraLontara		Ahmad Saransi (Soppeng)

8

SEX TO THE NEXT WORLD

HOLY DESCENT AND RESTORATIVE SEX FOR THE *MUALAD*

Teren Sevea

This chapter examines a late-nineteenth-century Malay erotic and physiological manual composed of the instructions of a Perak-based *pawang* (spiritual master). In doing so, particular attention is paid to the instructions of the *pawang* for a community who were to be devoted to the path of *ladzat* (sensual pleasures) while conscious of their esoteric culture, spiritual elitism, communal boundaries, peculiar identity and genealogy, sexual bodies and organs, and sophisticated religio-sexual rituals. It also attempts to locate this '*sayyid*' *pawang* and his prescribed practices within a late-nineteenth-century ideological context wherein the 'path of *ladzat*' was interpreted in certain circles as being a deviation from mainstream Sunnism. In reassembling teachings of this Muslim master from Malaya, it aims to present a window into erotic Muslim traditions, esoteric communities, restorative 'tantric' exercises, and religiously endowed notions of ʿAlid descent through the figure of the '*mualad*', in one part of Muslim Southeast Asia.

Islamic sex and the Esoteric Science of the Next-World

> Praise be to God, who created rods straight and hard as spears to wage war on vaginas.
>
> Jalaluddin Suyuti, *Kitāb al-Iḍāḥ fī ʿilm al-nikāḥ*

The *Kitāb al-Iḍāḥ fī ʿilm al-nikāḥ* of the Egyptian Shafī *ʿī faqīh*, Jalaluddin Suyuti (d.1505), commences with a 'pastiche in rhymed prose of the traditional Friday sermon'.[1] Herein, God is praised for the bounty of 'straight' and 'hard' penises that were created for 'waging war on vaginas' (*faraj*), and He is invoked to gift 'eternal glory and salvation' to Muslims who 'mounted the largest vaginas' as sexual adepts and 'sprinkled them quickly' with the orgasmic 'sweetness of their honey'. While this 'pastiche' of the medieval Shafī *ʿī faqīh* is illustrative of a long-standing Muslim textual tradition dealing with sexual organs and copulation, it is unfortunate that little scholarship has been devoted to exploring Muslim records that refer to sexual bodies, organs and performances as sites that generate sophisticated religious meanings, spiritual hierarchies, esotericism, saintliness and communal boundaries. Scott Kugle's recent exploration of *Sufis and Saints' Bodies* suggests that a range of Muslim texts from medieval to modern North Africa and South Asia are replete with information on key topics that have been oft-ignored by scholars of Islam. These include the Sufi 'fascination with God's presence' and 'God's immanence' in this world, which took the form of erotic Muslim 'engagements with the body' and sexual organs, and the importance of the sexual body in Islam as a space of mysticism and sacred power.[2]

Searching for distinct Muslim 'engagements with the body' in the Malay Peninsula, this paper scrutinises an unedited and unpublished erotic Malay manual from the William E. Maxwell collection of the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), *Malay 120*. This text contains the instructions of a Malay *pawang* for a community of *mualad* who were to be devoted to the path of *ladzat*, remain conscious of the religious and esoteric meanings of their sexual bodies, organs and performances, and enjoy the 'infinite orgasm' and sexual fulfilment of the *akhirat* (next-world) in late-nineteenth-century Malaya. This untitled manuscript, hereafter referred to as the *Ilmu Akhirat* (Esoteric Science of the Next-World), is composed of an untidily written header, 'Malay Erotic Pantheism from Perak—preacher of it gaoled in the 1880s', which is believed to have been added by Maxwell while he was serving as the Assistant Resident of Perak.[3] The *Malay 120* MS, in the vein of various Malay manuscripts from nineteenth-century Perak in the Maxwell collection containing the transmissions

of *pawang*s, *faqir*s (ascetics) and gurus, is in all probability a romanised transcription or complement to a work originally produced in Jawi.

Merle C. Ricklefs and Petrus Voorhoeve's catalogue of *Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain* refers to the *Ilmu Akhirat* as an 'Erotic pantheistic fragment from Perak ... At the beginning the author calls himself Muhammad Saleh. Dated at the beginning A.H. 1304 [A.D. 1886]'.[4] Indeed, the *Ilmu Akhirat* commences with the following colophon of sorts wherein Muhammad Saleh, who was either the transmitter or scribe of the manuscript, identifies himself as a recipient and 'memorizer' of the '*ilmu akhirat*' (esoteric science of the next-world) or 30 teachings transmitted by a *pawang* referred to as Pa' Sulong Hamida Allah—a resident or native of Perak:

> This is my remembrance [of the *ilmu*] Muhammad Saleh [–] pursuing the esoteric science of the next-world at [the source] Pa' [*pawang*] Sulong a man of Perak in the month of Shaʿaban in the year 1304 [April/May 1887 that] I receive together with immense hope in this *ilmu* being present [in this record].[5]

Whilst the *Ilmu Akhirat* does not consist of a definition of the spiritual category '*pawang*', an 1892 Jawi epistle produced by a Malaccan imām, Abdullah Al-Aydarus, which berated *pawang*s such as Pa' Sulong who had allegedly engulfed the Malay Peninsula in the fashion of 'pests that multiplied but never died', serves as a useful resource to understand the figure of the late-nineteenth-century *pawang*. Herein, *pawang*s such as Pa' Sulong are described as Muslim masters who were revered for their alleged possession of the *ilmu* and the *berkat* (transferable 'blessing' and power) of God and eclectic spiritual beings such as the prophet Muḥammad and Batara Guru (Siva), and as experts of material and corporeal activities ranging from the production of rice to 'powerful sexual intercourse'.[6] Furthermore, the records, journals and observation notes of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century European scholar–administrators, ethnographers and missionaries are replete with references to the Malay '*pawang*' as a 'magician, repository of immemorial superstitions and older faiths', a possessor of 'magical' expertise and incantations that were 'clouded in mystery' and inaccessible to the 'eye of the materialist', an 'accredited intermediary between men and spirits', and as a 'magical' expert at manipulating subtle physiology and regenerating or correcting sexual bodies.[7]

The writings of Richard O. Winstedt, the orientalist scholar and Director of Education, Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, are of particular relevance to this essay in terms of how they appear to discuss Pa' Sulong. For example, in Winstedt's book *The Malay Magician*, Pa' Sulong seems to be

referred to as a preacher from late-nineteenth-century Perak who 'taught an obscene form of pantheism', and 'degraded the famous cry of Abu Said: "there is nothing inside this coat except Allah"'.[8] According to Winstedt, this 'obscene pantheist' belonged to a social world wherein sexuality was intimately associated with the supernatural and it was dominated by an industry of *pawang*s who in turn consisted of 'magicians of the baser sort ready to purvey spells ... for the seduction of women'.[9] However, the most detailed reference to this 'preacher' from late-nineteenth-century Perak appears in Winstedt's essay, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm':

> There is a record of one flagrant example of heterodox pantheism from Perak 30 years ago. Its exponent was sentenced to gaol. The creed he taught found God in man: 'There is no God but God. I am God.' (*La ilaha illa'llah! Aku Allah! Allah ia Aku! Allahu Aku! Allah taʿala itu tiada melainkan diri ini Allah*.) The creed, alms, the pilgrimage, the turban, the sixteen pillars of a mosque, the steps of its pulpit, the holding of a staff by the preacher, the kissing of the Black Stone at Mecca were all ascribed to disgusting sexual analogies. Not 44 but 40 members are required for the congregation of a mosque because man and woman together have 40 fingers and toes. Hell is anger and heaven sexual love. The Angel of Death is man's eyes; the seven furnaces of Hell his knees; the bridge across the Fire his back-bone. One's right eye is Kiramun and one's left Katibin. And so on, a rigmarole of nonsense and an obscene travesty at an immeasurable distance of the Divine Love celebrated by the mystics of Persia.[10]

Written in 1922, Winstedt's article called upon English scholars to focus upon 'the Shiʿīte heresies and the pantheism, orthodox and heterodox' that were apparent in numerous facets of Malay religious culture. These included the prevalence of a 'gnostic concern with mystic names and formulae and the worship of innumerable saints' and 'pantheism that finds him [God] closer than the veins of one's neck', and especially the invocation of the '*Baginda Ali*' ('His Majesty ʿAli') within Malay charms.[11] Furthermore, in *Shaman, Saiva and Sufi*, Winstedt's observation notes point readers towards 'Malay magicians' in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Malaya such as Pa' Sulong who were adept at 'wilfully corrupting' the writings of Persian Sufis, including those of Abū Saʿīd ʿAbul Khayr (d.1049) and Mansūr al-Hallāj (d.922) on 'Divine Love', through combining 'legacies from Yogi ritual' with an 'orgiastic Sufism ... [that attached a] literal and carnal meaning to mystic union of lover and beloved'.[12]

Winstedt, unfortunately, makes no mention of how he obtained his data on Pa' Sulong and we are left to deduce that aspects of his aforementioned note in 'A Malay Pantheist Charm' were derived either from oral traditions of

the *pawang* that were 'remembered' and in turn transmitted by agents such as Muhammad, or from textual sources like the *Malay 120* MS. For instance, the 'creed' of Pa' Sulong that Winstedt cites, '*La ilaha illa'llah! Aku Allah! Allah ia Aku! Allahu Aku! Allah ta'ala itu tiada melainkan diri ini Allah*' resembles the first two teachings 'remembered' by Muhammad Saleh:

> The very first [lesson] that was instructed by him [Pa' Sulong] to me [Muhammad Saleh, was] There is no God but God [–] I am God [–] God is Me [–] The Godly Presence is Mine.[13]
>
> And furthermore concerning God Most High ['Allah Taala'] it is none excepting this is God [–] this self is God.[14]

It is also regrettable that Winstedt's scholarly interest in the transmissions of Pa' Sulong was driven toward uncovering evidence of Malay religious evolution in terms of the 'Malay magician's' synthesis of historical 'Yoga' with a 'crude [Islamic] mysticism' at the expense of topics such as the significance of sexual bodies and activities in Islam, the generation of sophisticated Islamic meanings through erotology, and Malay communities that experienced distinct Islamic sensations through the sexual arts.[15] Since the time of Winstedt's work, surveys of Muslim literature have revealed that a range of Muslim masters from medieval and early modern Muslim societies 'certainly did enjoy the pleasures of the body and of love' as sensations of the Islamic paradise, celebrated the power of *shahwat* (desire) and searched the experience of God within *ladzat*, and consumed 'God's wine that makes man intoxicated and enabled him to praise God more effectively' from the legs and backs of desirable women.[16] Moreover, scholars of Sufi physiological manuals in South and Southeast Asia are increasingly studying these Muslim texts through focusing on 'hybrid and multiple symbols, practices and doctrines that are at play in any particular religious milieu'.[17]

In exploring an unpublished corpus of North Sumatran erotic Muslim manuscripts, Vladimir Braginsky suggests that Acehnese Sufi doctrines, like their oft-quoted Javanese counterparts, contain a 'considerable admixture of Hindu–Buddhist, and particularly Tantric, elements'.[18] It is possible to consider the Perak manuscript, *Ilmu Akhirat*, as one composed of 'tantric elements' in terms of Pa' Sulong's directives on 'ritually appropriating and channelling [divine] energy' within the 'human microcosm, in creative and emancipatory ways' and limiting 'hardcore [sexual] rituals' to an exclusive 'inner circle' of spiritual adepts.[19] It is also plausible that the text was a reflection of Malay Muslim circles that were conscious of, and participated in, rites that could be considered 'yogic' or '*hatha* yogic'. These included the manipula-

tion of subtle physiology, the stabilisation of semen flows, the 'pronunciation of syllabic chants or mantras with occult efficacy' and the this-worldly invocation of next-worldly sensations. The Malay erotic and physiological manual does not, explicitly at least, refer to tantric *cakra*s (psychic centres), yogic terms for subtle nerves and breathing exercises, or the *kundalini*; yet the writings of Simon Digby and Carl W. Ernst have shown that there were precedents for such manuscripts within records and pedagogies that were orally transmitted by medieval and early modern South Asian Sufi masters. These had 'allegorised' erotic Kaula yogic disciplines, giving them an 'Islamic' character,[20] and 'assimilated' or 'acculturated' tantric yoga and yogis into a distinct Islamic cosmology and moral narrative, the Sharīʿa and an ethic of devotion towards the prophet Muḥammad.[21] Furthermore, Nile Green's work has drawn attention to orally transmitted Muslim physiological manuals from nineteenth-century South Asia that were perhaps akin to the *Ilmu Akhirat*, in terms of being revelatory of a 'shared popular understanding that Sufis and Yogis' were indulging in similar bodily or corporeal activities.[22]

This chapter is primarily concerned with recounting a history of corporeality, esoteric Muslim communities that strived for bodily sensations of the next-world, the importance of Muslim *pawang*s as sexual instructors, and sophisticated ʿAlid ancestries in the context of nineteenth-century Malaya through this example from its textual tradition. As Wendy Mukherjee shows in her work on the subject, valuable insights into the complex history of ʿAlid piety in Muslim Southeast Asia can be gained from textual traditions which include eighteenth-century tantric Ceribon Javanese literature and erotic representations of the Prophet Muḥammad's daughter, Fāṭima al-Zahra, in 'the *pasisir* zone'.[23] Whilst the *Ilmu Akhirat* is much less revelatory of 'scattered Shiʿa "elements"' in Malaya, it serves as a valuable window into a social world dominated by a *pawang* who appeared to engage religiously endowed notions of ʿAlid descent in the figure of the '*mualad*' and the sexual bodies, penises and coital rituals or techniques of the *mualad*.

The most detailed discussion of the category of *mualad* in the Malay archipelago has emerged in Engseng Ho's study of the peripatetic early modern and modern world of the ʿAlawi *sayyid*s from Ḥaḍramawt, the patrilineal descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad through Aḥmad b. ʿĪsa, 'the Migrant' (d.956).[24] As Ho shows, multicultural diasporic experiences and canonical texts led to the consolidation of a pattern of '*sayyid* marriage privilege'. According to this system, '*sayyid*s could be wife takers [of non-*sayyid* lineages] but not wife givers' [of *sharīfa*, or a female descendant of Muḥammad]. The

dynamics of such marriage patterns facilitated the formation of a category of high-status 'creoles' or *'muwallad'* (M. *mualad*).[25] However, beyond Ho's genealogical definition, there remains considerable ambiguity surrounding the term *mualad*, and there is evidence that it was used in varied local contexts to connote diverse groups in Muslim South and Southeast Asia. These included locally-born Persianate Muslims in the late-seventeenth-century Deccan, slaves in nineteenth-century Malaya who apparently inherited their master's religious culture, name and even status as descendants of the Prophet, and peripatetic non-*sayyid lebbais* (petty Tamil religious dignitaries) who circulated between the nineteenth-century Bay of Bengal and claimed an ʿAlid descent and even *pawang*-hood to 'loot silly Malays' in the Malayan interior.[26] In fact, late-nineteenth-century Jawi epistles which are currently preserved by a descendant of the *keramat* (miracle-worker) Hussein bin Abu Bakar Al-Aydarus (d.1756) in Jakarta appear to be illustrative of cosmopolitan settings wherein alleged 'fakers' and 'commoners' had proclaimed the title of '*mualad*' and were respected as possessing bodies that were replete with the 'unadulterated [patrilineal] blood' of ʿAlawi *sayyid*s.[27] Whilst the *Ilmu Akhirat* fails to provide a clear definition of the '*mualad*', Pa Sulong's erotic lessons for the *mualad* appear to be revelatory of a guarded community of descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad who bridged the ontological gulf between the soul trapped in matter and the transcendental immaterial God' through embodying God's *dzat* or *dhāt* (essence), and enjoyed the 'sexual self-fulfilment' and 'infinite orgasm' of Islamic paradise in Perak.[28]

The Sayyid *Master of Eros in Perak*

The provenance of the *Ilmu Akhirat* and its original transmitter, Pa' Sulong, remain unclear in both the Malay manual and European accounts pertaining to the *pawang*. The little we learn from Maxwell's aforementioned note is that Pa' Sulong was 'gaoled in the 1880s'. Similarly, Winstedt's *The Malay Magician* introduces Pa' Sulong as a 'magician' who was imprisoned because of the 'dangerous creed' that he propagated.[29]

Whilst there appears to be no surviving architectural signs of a shrine complex devoted to a Muslim *pawang* akin to Pa' Sulong in contemporary Perak, his past is still partly mediated and orally transmitted by certain *bomor*s or *pawang*s in the Malay Peninsula. For instance, the 'visions' of Muhammad Ahmad Ridhwan in Larut, recorded at the shrine of an Acehnese *keramat*, Toh Bidan Susu Lanjut ('the honourable midwife with elongated breasts to

provide milk'), identified Pa' Sulong as a Hajji Abdul Karim who was expelled from Bukit Gantang for '*ajaran yang menyesatkan*' (instructions that led devotees astray).[30] Ridhwan's history was preoccupied with a critique of the 'way of the Shiʿa' that Pa' Sulong allegedly propagated through his 'vulgar identification of himself with God and the Prophet', but his version is corroborated by data in the May 1877 *Perak Council Minutes* on the disciplining of Abdul Karim's 'immoral conduct' or 'vulgar tantrism'.[31] Similarly, the 'visions' and oral traditions transmitted by an itinerant *bomor* present in Perak and custodian of the erstwhile shrine of a *keramat*, Siti Maryam Al-Aydarus (d.1853), Muhammad Hashim, recount the history of Pa' Sulong as a '*Kling* [Tamil or Telugu] liar' who had ingeniously reconfigured himself into a 'descendant of the Prophet of God through Sayyidina Ali' and as a '*pawang*'.[32] According to Muhammad Hashim's historical recollection, Pa' Sulong was pivotal to a community of 'sexually aroused Malays' who also claimed to be 'descendants of the Prophet of God through Sayyidina Ali' in the interior of Belanja through his exclamation of '*Aku Allah—Allahu Aku*' (I am God—the Godly Presence is Me) and of powers to gift his devotees sensations of the next-world through 'parts of the body and acts' that the contemporary *bomor* was too embarrassed to specify.

Alternatively, the 'recollections' of Abas Ali from Sungei Siput, which were 'verified' by a once-practising *bomor* and erstwhile *penghulu* (headman) Mukim Sungei Siput, pointed out that Pa' Sulong or 'Habib Hamidullah Al-Aydarus' was a peripatetic ʿAlawī *sayyid* of Hadhrami paternal and Tamil maternal descent who possessed the *berkat* of historical *pawang*s and propagated Islamic techniques of reconstructing the human body into a 'bridge to paradise'. According to Abas Ali, Pa' Sulong served as the pivot of a devotional cult composed of the Prophetic patri-line and a *tarekat* (*ṭarīqa* or pathway) in late-nineteenth-century Belanja, and due to his popularity became a victim of a court-orchestrated programme to 'persecute the Shiʿa and *tarekat*s' in the late nineteenth century.[33] It is unfortunate that Abas Ali's testimonies remain vague about Pa' Sulong's ʿAlid descent and his affiliation to the al-Aydrusiyya lineage, and how the *pawang* was central to the establishment of a devotional cult composed of Muslim rice cultivators who shared (or were initiated into) this lineage as '*mualad*'.

There is little evidence in the *Ilmu Akhirat* to verify Abas Ali's testimony to Pa' Sulong's parentage and to determine the social composition of the recipients of the *pawang*'s instructions, yet there are references in two instructions of Pa' Sulong to the 'descent of *peterah* [Ar. *fitra*, tithe of crops paid at the end

of Ramadan]' and the 'provenance of *zakat* [almsgiving]' respectively, suggesting that his audience was involved in the production of rice and that the *pawang* was involved in the calculation of proportions of the crop for tithes and alms. These lessons also appear revelatory of Pa Sulong's expertise in dictating to circles of rice producers that the required '*sa-gantang*' (a measure of rice equivalent to 3.125 kg) as *peterah* and zakāt was to be esoterically issued through equivalent 'coitally ejaculated sperm' and charitably surpassed by 'powerful sexual intercourse' (*kuat jimak*) and 'additional coition with women' respectively.[34] Nevertheless, it is possible that within these sections of the *Ilmu Akhirat*, Pa' Sulong was communicating his teachings on the sexual arts and Islamically appropriate 'measures' of coition and ejaculation to an audience familiar with rice agriculture and calculations of the crop within Perak's agricultural economy.

Both the aforementioned notes of Maxwell and Winstedt and the testimonies of *bomor*s in the contemporary Peninsula suggest that Pa' Sulong's career as a *pawang* or preacher was halted by incarceration, due to his alleged teaching of 'erotic pantheism', 'identification with an all-powerful God', 'vulgar tantrism' and 'Shi'a and *tarekat*' ways. If we are to adopt Ridhwan's and Abas Ali's testimonies as accurately preserved historical traditions, Pa' Sulong appears to have suffered the fate of *pawang*s targeted by court-sponsored projects of 'Islamisation' in late-nineteenth-century Trengganu. According to the Resident of Pahang, H. C. Clifford, these 'magicians' or *pawang*s were 'dealt out mutilation or death, or the imprisonment in gaol-cages which is worse than death', in accordance with the strictest spirit of Islamic law.[35] Whilst a fuller exploration of the *Ilmu Akhirat* is limited by scarce historical data on the events surrounding—or the nature of—Pa' Sulong's 'gaoling', it is tempting to locate the erotic manual in a phenomenon of Malay history that has been characterised by William R. Roff as '*institutional* Islamisation'.[36] As we learn from the works of Roff and John M. Gullick, the period between the establishment of the British Residency in 1874 in Perak and the passing of the 1904 Mohammedan Laws Enactment in the Federated Malay States witnessed projects by elite 'Malay interested parties' to 'extend the reach of *Shari'a* prescription (and their own writ)', and make 'an informal, if arbitrary, system [of policing "proper conduct between the sexes, and religious doctrine itself"] hardened into bureaucracy'.[37]

Due to the limited information on the penetration of '*institutional* Islamisation' into village and rice worlds in Perak, it is only possible to conjecture that the *Ilmu Akhirat*'s pleas for secrecy (elaborated upon in the following

section) and the very process of transcribing esoteric and orally-transmitted *Ilmu Akhirat* in 1887 (shortly preceding or following Pa Sulong's 'gaoling') was reflective of a community's concerns with preserving its erotic and physiological rituals.[38] Nevertheless, it is futile to put forward a causality between post-1874 'Islamisation' in Perak and the *Ilmu Akhirat*'s pleas to secrecy, as a number of 'pantheistic' charms or manuals transcribed in nineteenth-century Malaya were products of esoteric movements 'mediated by living teachers and surrounded by the empowering rhetoric of secrecy'.[39]

For example, introducing Pa' Sulong in 'A Malay Pantheist Charm', Winstedt transcribes a secret esoteric charm "*ilmu kota tauhid yang di-amalkan oleh Tuan Maklab Setam*' ('knowledge of the fortress of the Unity of God as practised by Tuan Maklab Setam') that he attained 'in an East Coast State of the Malay Peninsula' but was forbidden 'to divulge its home exactly' through a 'promise to its possessor'.[40] A similar pattern of secrecy is apparent in a Jawi *Epistle from the tuan Sheikh Husain of Pulau Tiga [-] a Khaus on Kias* addressed to the '*sahabat* [companion] *tuan* [Acting] *Resident*', Maxwell, which appears to have been produced in October 1881 and is currently kept as MS 46945 at SOAS, and which concludes with the appeal '*jangan ditunjukan surat ini kapada orang lain*' ('this epistle should not be revealed to others').[41] This epistle is replete with warnings for a spiritually exclusive circle against 'suspicion' and 'forgetfulness' of the Shaykh's *kias*, teachings on restorative *zikr* exercises to be undertaken even in latrines, and direct associations of 'paths to God' such as Sharīʿa and *maʿrifat* (inner experiential knowledge) with the human body (the product of the '*nūr*' of God and Muḥammad) and 'sexual passion' (the product of 'the brightness of Muḥammad') respectively.[42]

Lessons for the Mualad*: Esotericism, Holy Descent and Sexual Performance*

Analysed and selectively cited in this section are a series of instructions of Pa' Sulong in the *Ilmu Akhirat* that were driven towards guiding his devotees or the *mualad* in ways to understand their esoteric culture, spiritual elitism, communal boundaries, peculiar identity and genealogy, sophisticated sexual bodies and coital exercises or rituals. Many of the lessons recorded in the text are richly detailed in terms of their sexual vocabulary, and as such provide a vivid impression of the religio-sexual traditions of both Pa' Sulong and the devotees he attracted through his erotic and physiological methods. The Malay manual appears technical in its references to intimacy, unlike many examples of tradi-

tional Javanese erotology such as the early-twentieth-century *Serat Candraning Wanita* which are replete with mystical coition and meditative or symbolic visualisation of coitus.[43] Examples of practical descriptions of particular positions described in this Malay text include: '*masok dzakar kita itu kapada kiparat perempuan*' (enter our penis into the vagina of the woman), '*menarek dzakar kita itu daripada kiparat perempuan kita*' (pull our penis from the vagina of our woman), '*mualad kita jimak dengan perempuan kita*' (our *mualad* perform coition with our women), and '*kita jimak memegang kopek perempuan*' (we have sex holding the breast of the woman). Whilst the term '*kiparat*', which is employed throughout the text, may appear to be a vague reference to the Arabic word '*kafarra*' or '*kafarat*' that connotes atonement or penance; here it appears to be used for '*ki-p/farat*', '*ki*' being a title for either honourable persons or personified body parts, and '*p/farat*' being a local variant of *faraj* (vagina).

A key didactic purpose of the *Ilmu Akhirat* is evident in Pa' Sulong's third lesson on the 'internal' performance of the '*Takbiratu'l ihram*' (the formula *Allahu Akbar*, God is Great, used at the beginning of prayer). This instruction appears to be revelatory of the *pawang*'s preoccupation with imparting his *ilmu akhirat*—or the esoteric culture of an ageing generation of devotees or *mualad*—to the younger *mualad*, through the medium of 'memorisers' such as Muhammad Saleh. Herein, the *pawang* emphasises the need for the '*mualad* [to] keep awake' and for the mature or ardent followers of his *ilmu* to 'embrace the body awaiting for the *ladzat* ... together with our [younger] *mualad*', and expresses his anxieties about the fact that 'nearing is the time to stop' or 'the time when we stop'.[44]

Pa' Sulong's directions for the performance of the '*Takbiratu'l ihram*' are also revelatory of an esoteric community of *mualad* in late-nineteenth-century Perak that was devoted to the task of proclaiming the formula *Allahu Akbar* 'internally', 'smoothening the heart internally', celebrating the 'remembrance of God and the pain of death' and following the path and miraculous powers of *ladzat*. The *pawang*'s instruction was explicitly directed toward a spiritual elite, a community of Muslims in the Peninsula that was not simply concerned with the 'external' proclamation of the *Takbiratu'l ihram*, but rather preoccupied with overcoming the confines of the body ('hair', 'elbows', 'blood', 'sinews' and 'bones'), meditative postures and psychic centres, and attaining the sensation of spiritually passing away or 'death before death' (an experience that is equivalent to a coveted religious experience that has been characterised in Sufi literature in particular, as *fana*).[45] Moreover, the *Ilmu Akhirat* consists of a series of

instructions of Pa' Sulong that serve as compelling portrayals of both the *pawang*'s role as an intermediary of the *mualad* and an esoteric community that preserved its religious boundaries and ritual alienation vis-à-vis other Muslims in late-nineteenth-century Perak. For instance, the lesson on *hendak semperna sembahyang jemaat* (desire to complete/blessed congregational worship) is revelatory of both Pa' Sulong's concerns about imparting the esoteric culture of an ageing generation to the *mualad* and illustrative of the spiritual elitism and religio-sexual rituals of the *mualad* under his guidance:

> [...] our *mualad*'s coitus with our women [–] following that coition we proceed to the mosque [–] we shall not look left and right [–] *mualad* our heads [are to be] veiled with a white cloth [–] there is no need for us to take water [for] ablution [–] rather we enter into the mosque but let it be suffice with cleansing our hearts [–] having completed our congregational prayers, we return with our heads veiled in the white cloth [–] we shall not look any more towards left and right [–] we reach our homes [–] we return to having sex with our women.[46]

The aforementioned instruction is illustrative of the religio-sexual practices of Pa' Sulong's ideal *mualad*-devotees who firstly indulged in the spiritually elite cause of 'cleansing their hearts' (akin to the procedure of 'smoothening of the heart' mentioned in the lesson on *Takbiratu'l ihram*) rather than physical ablutions practised by common worshippers in the mosque. Secondly, they were conscious of actual 'congregational worship' involving a combination of both mosque-based rituals and sexual intercourse, and of the fact that the sexual act neither required a ritual bath nor indicated any 'danger' that would probably make the *mualad* vulnerable to *hantu shetan* (demons and the armies of Iblis).[47] Thirdly, they avoided socialisation with the *jemaat* of common Muslims who were preoccupied with exoteric rather than esoteric cleansing through a veil and refrained from 'looking left and right' in the midst of the *jemaat*. Possibly demarcating the *mualad* from members of the mosque-based *jemaat*, the final instruction transcribed in the Malay manual clarifies that the spiritually elite follower of the *pawang* achieved 'esoteric worship and exoteric worship concurrently' through coition.[48]

Further mention of the *jemaat* emerges in Pa' Sulong's instruction on the *mukim sembahyang jemaat itu empat puloh empat* (a settlement with the 44 [adult male Muslims] required for congregational prayer) wherein the *pawang* clarified that the conventional Malay congregation that was constituted by 44 worshippers was simply an exoteric congregation created 'by haphazard initiative'. On the contrary, the complete Islamic congregation that superseded the mosque-based *jemaat* was formed by 'ones who are true [who] are 40 only

comprising twenty male fingers-and-toes and twenty female fingers-and-toes'. It is possible that Pa' Sulong's reference to the combined 40 fingers and toes of copulating partners is a suggestion that bodies in the midst of intercourse attained either spiritual completion (40 being a number of spiritual completion in Islam) or the comprehensive experience of the typical Sufi meditation retreat that lasted 40 days.[49]

The *Ilmu Akhirat* serves as a detailed record of the religio-sexual culture and practices transmitted by a Perak-based *pawang* to a faithful community that appears to have claimed an ʿAlid ancestry by the late nineteenth century. This peculiar religio-sexual culture of Pa' Sulong's devotional circle is evident, for instance, in the *pawang*'s lesson on the 'descent of *shahadat*' which is subsequent to the passage on '*Takbiratu'l ihram*', wherein the penetration of the vagina is portrayed as a sophisticated method of propagating Islam or the exclamation of the profession of faith (in the form: *Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allah*, *wa ashhadu anna Muḥammad rasul Allah*). This instruction highlights the evangelical value of inserting the penis into the vagina and reciting the pious formula '*Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allah*'. Upon 'pulling back' the penis this religio-sexual rite culminates with the penetrated female partner reciting '*wa ashhadu anna Muḥammad rasul Allah*'—thus completing the second half of the *shahāda*.[50]

Muslim physiological manuals such as the *Ziya al-qulūb* (The Brilliance of the Hearts) of the South Asian Sufi master Hajji Imdad Allah (d.1899) that consist of notes on the recitation of the *shahadat*, and the spiral of negation and affirmation it generates as a force for rectifying organs and limbs, are useful resources to understand the corporeality of the chant which appears in two passages of the *Ilmu Akhirat*.[51] Nevertheless, the Malay manual is more preoccupied with depicting the spiritual elitism of a devotional circle whose practices of *jimak* and abiding by the 'path of *ladzat*' resulted in distinct Islamic achievements and sensations of the next-world or paradise. This is particularly apparent in a teaching on the 'descent of seventy thousand *ratib* [ritual for the remembrance of God]' wherein *jimak* is a spiritual ceremony that gifts the devotee of Pa' Sulong and *mualad* the spiritual achievement of having performed many rituals of *ratib* or *zikr*, the experience of the Islamic paradise in the Malay Peninsula, and converts the sexual body and organs into nodes between this-world and the next-world:

> seventy thousand *ratib* from our act of coitus with our women [–] the active sounds from that is the descent of seventy thousand *ratib* [–] it appears as *rasa shurga* [the sensation, or secret heart's experience of, heaven] as we have sex with our women

> completely/blessedly [–] it appears as *rasa neraka* [the sensation, or secret heart's experience of hell] as our heart contains wrath [–] it appears as *malik al-maut* [King of Death] in our eyes and seven cauldrons from hell in our knee bone[52] and [alternatively, through coitus] the bridge of *siratal mustakim* [the right path] is our backbone and the plain of *siratal mustakim* is also our arm bones [–] these are the internodes below.[53]

Beyond its depiction of a spiritually elite community centred upon Pa' Sulong, the *Ilmu Akhirat* contains instructions that emphasise the need for estrangement and concealment vis-à-vis non-initiated Muslims. For example, an extract from the section on 'prayer cannot be *di-kadza* [replaced later]' memorised by Muhammad Saleh is at pains to convince the circle of the *pawang* about the need for secrecy about their religio-sexual rituals:

> [...] our prayers that remain, those too cannot be reported to people, because we would be gravely shamed [–] it would appear as if we are reporting that we performed coitus with our women.[54]

It is plausible that the aforementioned passage's counsel for the *mualad* to exercise estrangement from general worshippers is revelatory about criticism or condemnation of the esoteric community's 'errant' ways in late-nineteenth-century Perak. Both this directive of Pa' Sulong, and the teaching on fasting [*puasa*] during Ramadan, commence with random warnings for devotees that 'prayer cannot be replaced later [*di-kadza*] for the reason that we have sex with our women' and that it 'appears [to the un-initated] that we are not fasting'.[55] Whilst it is tempting to suggest that the anxieties of the *pawang* as expressed through his emphasis upon reticence was evidence of '*institutional* Islamisation', these sections are preoccupied with affirming the spiritual elitism of a community that abided by the 'errant' ways prescribed by Pa' Sulong. This is manifest in how both these lessons clarify that the practice of *kadza* could be indulged in but was 'not [to] be reported to people',[56] and that the instructed undertook a superior form of fasting wherein they were merely '*puas* [sated] from coitus with women'.[57]

These lessons of Pa' Sulong that were preoccupied with imparting the esoteric rituals and spiritual elitism of a community of *mualad* to the 'younger *mualad*' fail to contain any definition of the category '*mualad*' and were directed towards an audience familiar with the term or its appropriation. Nevertheless, the *Ilmu Akhirat* serves as a valuable historical record of ʿAlid descent in the Peninsula in terms of how it seems to reconfigure the '*mualad*' into a distinct Muslim community that was not merely categorised as a product of multicultural diasporic marriages or patrilinearity, but rather through

the corporeal embodiment of God's *dzat*. The most vivid description of the peculiar ancestry of Pa' Sulong's community, and in all probability definition of the *mualad*, is manifested in the directive on *ayer maal hati di langit-langit* (treasured fluid of the inner heart in the heavens) concerning the genealogy of the *pawang* and his devotional circle:

> [...] treasured fluid of the inner heart in the heavens [–] our mouth that is the residence of this *ayer* [fluid] then it descends below, it is named *layar-layar* [sailing], then it reaches at the vagina of our woman, it is named *mani* [semen], enters into the wombs of our woman with the desire to become resident children without *dzat* [essence], then having reached four months of that period preceding *dzat* [–], those named children have exited the wombs of their mothers [–] Allah Himself is this [–] this is the descent of our self.[58]

This passage refers to Pa' Sulong and his community of *mualad* as embodiments of God's *dzat*, and directly associates the 'Alid 'descent' of the Perak-based community with a sophisticated transmogrification of heavenly semen into the *mualad*.[59] This is apparent in the description of the gradual descent of semen (or the '*ayer maal hati*' that develops into semen) from the 'heavens' into the 'mouth', possibly through the cerebral region and dripping through a cavity in the skull,[60] and thereupon into the vagina and wombs of women who copulated with Pa' Sulong and his community of *mualad*. This genealogical lesson on 'the descent of our self' being 'Allah Himself' is perhaps the most explicit clarification of Pa' Sulong's aforementioned claim that 'God is Me [,] The Divine Presence is Mine' and 'this self is God'.[61]

The instruction on the 'treasured fluid of the inner heart in the heavens' is also revelatory of another key didactic purpose of Pa' Sulong's transmissions, the active procreation of the *mualad* who embodied *dzat*. Indeed, the *pawang*'s preoccupation with the reproduction of the *mualad* is evident in multiple heteronormative sections of the *Ilmu Akhirat* which solely address heterosexual vaginal intercourse and consist of a patriarchal association of women with their vaginas to be penetrated by the *mualad* and wombs to transform heavenly sexual fluids into the *dzat*-embodying *mualad*. These sections of the Malay manual include the detailed references to entering the '*dzakar*' (penis) into the '*kiparat perempuan*' (vagina of the woman) within the instructions on 'the *shahadat*', 'entering the mosque door', 'kissing the Black Stone at Mekah', 'bringing the *shahadat*' and '*Ayer maal hati* in the heavens'; or the '*lobang kiparat perempuan*' (hole of the woman's vagina) in the teachings on 'the pulpit ladder of three levels' and 'the mosque door'.[62] Ultimately, the *Ilmu Akhirat* does not appear to make any mention of sexual practices beyond vaginal pen-

etration. Even the single reference to '*kopek*' ('breast') in the passage on 'holding the staff above the pulpit ladder' comes with the explanation that it is to be hand-held and was possibly an association of the female partner with organs of nutrition for the infant *mualad*.[63] We are yet uncertain whether Pa' Sulong's lessons on the 'descent of *sedekah*' and 'descent of *kekah* [possibly, *aqiqa* or the sacrifice of an animal upon the birth of a child]', both from '*tekakah kaki perempuan*' (*tekakah* may be a variant of *tekak* or dry, legs of woman) refer to copulating in between 'the legs of the woman'.[64]

The aforementioned instruction on '*ayer maal hati*' appears to categorise the *mualad* as a community who bridged the ontological chasm between the soul engulfed by the corporeal body and the immaterial God through embodying God's *dzat* or *dhāt* (essence) upon 'exiting the wombs of their mothers'. Nevertheless, part of a lesson of Pa' Sulong on the 'children newly exiting from their mother's womb' memorised by Muhammad Saleh suggests, albeit vaguely, that being or performing as a *mualad* was connected to the 'words' or techniques (probably the sexual exercises to be discussed below) of the *pawang*.[65] Indeed, whilst Muslim physiological manuals such as the *Ziya al-qulūb* of Hajji Imdad Allah directly associated breathing as a Sufi with being motivated by the master,[66] in the *Ilmu Akhirat* to exist as a *mualad* and to enjoy a *nyawa asmani* (life of the hereafter) in the course of *nyawa* [*jasmani*] (life of the body), meant to be literally inspired by the *berkat* of the *pawang*.[67] Moreover, the *Ilmu Akhirat*'s reminders for its audience to 'embrace the body' in instructions pertaining to 'our names' and 'the seven ranks [or] seven doors' suggest that the techniques and *berkat* of Pa' Sulong allowed the *mualad* to gain access to his subtle body as a manifestation of names and attributes, and as such into the next-world.[68] These directives state that Pa' Sulong's followers attained both esoteric knowledge of these names and attributes and unions with the four Caliphs in the order of ʿAlī, Abū Bakar, ʿUmar, Uthmān and the two angelic recorders of deeds, Kiraman and Katibin—who are manifest as 'names' of the right arm, left arm, right leg, left leg, right eye and left eye respectively[69]—and the seven '*martabat*' (ranks) of traditional Sufi literature through the psychic centres, located within the mouth, right nostril, left nostril, right eye, left eye, right ear and left ear, respectively.[70]

Beyond the association of other-worldly sensations with the speech, techniques and *berkat* of Pa' Sulong, the *Ilmu Akhirat* consists of discussions of the *pawang*'s prescribed methods of relating to the subtle body, plexuses, psychic centres and sexual fluids. For instance, the aforementioned directive on '*Takbiratu'l Ihram*' that calls upon the *mualad* to follow the 'path of *ladzat*'

appears to propose that the ideal *mualad* could experience the sensation of 'death before death' through a distinct physiological exercise of 'opening up' a psychic centre below the sacrum.[71] Similarly, the lesson on '*ayer maal hati di langit-langit*' related to the gradual descent of heavenly sexual fluids through a series of plexuses toward the '*dzakar*' as '*layar layar*' (to 'sail' or 'float') seems to urge the penis-bearing devotee to channel heavenly sexual fluids and stabilise possibly chaotic flows of sexual fluids. Indeed, Digby's study of the medieval Chishti master, Abd al-Quddus Gangohi (d.1537), has shown that Sufis were familiar with yogic texts and techniques to mediate chaotic sexual fluids that were consumed by carnal desires at the sacrum, and physiological exercises that made a 'force' ascend through the spine and unite with the 'force' responsible for the production of *rasa* (seminal fluid or 'water of life') in the skull and eliminate bodily decay.[72] Such Sufi and yogic historical precedents make it apparent that Pa' Sulong was transmitting peculiar physiological techniques to the *mualad*, of 'opening up' the 'anus', and causing semen to rise along a system of plexuses in the subtle body along the spine, resulting in stiffness along the jugular, and a ritual which resulted in the male adept's unity with the 'heavens' responsible for the production of '*ayer*', preventing the decay of the *mualad*'s sexual organs and preserving the purity of the Godly seed.[73]

The *Ilmu Akhirat* also places particular emphasis on the role of the sexual fluids and orgasms of Pa' Sulong's followers in spearheading the attainment of comprehensive Islamic worship. The spiritually enhancing properties of the orgasms and sexual fluids of the *mualad* are most apparent in the passages on 'entering the mosque door' and 'our coitus with our women after having transmitted the *shahadat*', which are as follows:

> [...] our *mualad* enter our penis into the vagina of the woman [associated with the door of the mosque] [–] then we insert a bit of our penis into the vagina of the woman [–] then arrives the *panas* [heat] from our incision [–] *assalamalaikum* cite the men [–] the women say *waalaikum salam* [signifying the completion of prayer].[74]

> [...] Once we have transmitted the *shahadat* we retract our penis from the vagina of our woman [–] *Ashhadu ala ilaha il'l-llah* say men *Wa ashhadu ana Muhammada rasul'l-llah* say the woman [...] having brought the shahadat or married those women too [–] there is no need to bathe [as] this brings *hadath* [concept of major ritual impurity requiring complete ablution].[75]

The instruction on 'entering the mosque door' links the insertion of the penis with 'entering the mosque [here, vagina]' and the '*panas*' or orgasmic climax with the completion of prayer,[76] and the lesson on 'transmitting the

shahadat' connects the posture of retracting the ejaculated penis to having transmitted the *shahadat* or making the partner embrace Islam (also perhaps captured in the sudden mention of '*nikah*' or consummated marriage).[77] Similarly, the aforementioned section of the *Ilmu Akhirat* on the 'desire for complete and blessed congregational worship' associates the completion of 'worship' with regular, effective coitus upon returning from the mosque, that results in the female partner 'unable to walk from the house' and the ejaculation of 'flowing' of the 'fluids of men and women'.[78]

On the one hand, it is apparent in these transmissions of Pa' Sulong that sexual performances of the penis-bearing *mualad* together with the recital of certain prayers or pious formulae produced the spiritual intensity of 'complete worship' and the coveted sensation of spiritual heat that was possibly akin to the yogic concept of inner force (*tapas*). On the other hand, these directives accentuate to the *mualad* that their sexual fluids were spiritually potent articles that did not require cleansing. The *pawang*'s audience is cautioned against bathing, or washing their heavenly sexual fluids, after ejaculation because this was not required 'by law',[79] and that in fact doing so would be tantamount to *hadath* (a condition of impurity typically associated with ejaculation, menstruation and lochia that resulted in vulnerability to demons and the armies of Iblis).[80]

The *Ilmu Akhirat* further contains meticulous descriptions of how religious ascendancy, the stature of the hajji and imām and physical contact with the Kaʿba were attainable through perfected erections, stretching of the dorsal nerve, and techniques of penetrating vaginas and breaking hymens. This is particularly evident in the *pawang*'s lessons on (in order of transcription) 'the descent of *orang Haji*' (Ar. *hajji;* pilgrim), 'the descent of the coiling turban of *Haji Kemina*', 'the descent of the mosque with sixteen masts', 'the descent of *membar* [the pulpit] ladder of 3 levels', and 'the descent of 'holding the staff above the pulpit ladder'. Extracts from the teachings on the '*orang Haji*' and the 'coiling turban of *Haji Kemina* [the pilgrim to Mina]' are cited as follows:

> the descent of *hajji*s from our penis's notching [–] the dangling turban of the *hajji*s [–] the [possibly, dorsal] nerve of our penis at the bottom is notched [and] stretched.[81]
>
> [...] the descent of coiling turban of the *hajji* to Mina [–] it appears [that we travel] not to Mina but to our woman [*ka-betina*, the sensation of] newly marrying virgins [–] rather we even have coitus with our women [–] if there is a hymen our women will coil at the notch of our penis.[82]

The aforementioned passage on '*hajji*s' depicts the pilgrimage ceremony as one attainable for male devotees through the carnal rites of arousing the

sacrum, 'stretching' the dorsal nerve and 'notching' the erected penis. The subsequent section on the 'coiling turban of the *hajji* to Mina' associates perfect sexual performance with the '*betina*' to the *kurban* (sacrifice) on 10 Dhū'l-Ḥijja, 'Īd al-Qurbān, which is marked as the central day of the *hajj* celebrations by most Muslims.[83] According to Pa' Sulong's transmission, the sensation of the coiling turban of the *hajji* to Mina is 'descended from' the dynamic sexual rites of 'travelling to' and stimulating the female partner; attaining the sensation of 'marrying virgins' through drawing blood or breaking a hymen (which appears connected to sacrificial blood-spilling at Mina) at the 'notch of our penis'; and as such, making the female partner 'coil around the penis' as a turban.[84]

The late-nineteenth-century ethnography of *Perak and the Malays* by the Chief Commissioner for the Pacification of Larut (Perak), John F. McNair, and the later work by J. M. Gullick on the nineteenth-century Perak 'Malay Village Community', include discussions of the spiritual ascendancy attributed to *hajji*s who were 'ordained as priests, when they may wear turbans',[85] and these priests or 'imāms' who were most 'important in the hierarchy of village authority'.[86] The discursive enchantment of travel or *hajj*, sustained by annual contingents of several hundred pilgrims from the Malay Peninsula in the late nineteenth century,[87] was configured within the *Ilmu Akhirat* as being sexually attainable without having to leave Perak. Indeed, while the thirteenth-century Persian Sufi, Jalaluddin Rumi, had celebrated the kissing of the Black Stone at the eastern corner of the Kaʿaba as a means to 'the taste of the lip of the beloved',[88] Pa' Sulong's teaching on the 'descent of kissing the black stone (*hajaru aswat*) stone in Mekah' made the sensations of the Kaʿba attainable for his male devotee in late-nineteenth-century Malaya through a vigorous phallus and vaginal intercourse: 'from our penis entering at the vagina of the woman [–] then it is as if no longer meeting our penis [–] that is the *Hajaru aswat* stone inside the vagina of the woman'.[89]

The passages on 'the descent of the mosque with sixteen masts', 'the descent of *membar* [the pulpit] ladder of three levels' and 'the descent of holding the staff above the pulpit ladder', alternatively, associate the sexual prowess of Pa' Sulong's male followers with ascendancy to the stature of imām. The instruction on the 'mosque with sixteen masts', perhaps referring to stations or nodes for followers to pass through, introduces eight which are dedicated to women and are 'taller' and 'extend beyond' that of the men, and the feet of women that 'extend beyond [and are] also above' those of their male partners.[90] While the interpretation of this section is yet somewhat opaque, the subsequent teachings

are explicit about how firstly, the '*membar* ladder of three levels ["descends"] from the hole of the vagina of the woman [that is] three levels', possibly connoting the Sufi speculations on the three levels of the lover, beloved and love.[91] Secondly, the 'descent of holding the staff above the pulpit ladder' or the imām involved 'reading the *khuṭba* [sermon] from the time we have sex [–] holding the breast of the woman'.[92] Herein, the pulpit ladder is associated with the 'hole of the vagina' that is 'three levels', and the staff of the imām is linked to the hand-held '*kopek*', illustrating a vital coital rite of penetrating inwards while reciting the sermon. Furthermore, in Pa Sulong's instruction on the 'descent of *Bang*', the *mualad* are educated on vigorous sexual conduct which does not only make an adept a *hajji*, imām or *khatib* (reciter), but also produces the muezzin's call to prayer from the 'enlivened penis'.[93]

Conclusion

The manuscript discussed in this chapter is by no means the only example of a Malay Islamic text treating matters of sexual practice. A considerable number of Malay manuscripts that were compiled and/or transmitted before the mid-twentieth century contain rich detail on techniques to enhance sensual pleasure (*ladzat*) and create the sensation of orgasm (*panas*),[94] remedies for erectile dysfunctions or impotency,[95] irregular ejaculations,[96] and tricks for inadequate men to 'arouse' female partners and eliminate their sexual urges for other men.[97] Surviving examples of such include the *Kitab Ta'bir, Nujum, Raksi dan Hubatan Hikmat* (an 1893 'transcription from Ibrahim Loyar' in Malacca),[98] *Ilmu Penyakit* (compiling the transmissions of a Tengku Su in Trengganu),[99] *Kitab Ubat-Ubat Melayu* (an abstract of an older text of the father of Engku Pengiran Anum, Kuala Trengganu),[100] *Rejang Ketika dari Kelantan* (a typescript of an original work in Kelantan),[101] and the untitled 'Book of Charms' formerly belonging to a Sultan Muda of Perak and given to R. O. Winstedt by Raja Haji Yahya of Chendriang.[102] However, although the text discussed in this chapter is preoccupied with sacred sexual bodies and the vigorous religio-sexual rituals of the *mualad*, the *Ilmu Akhirat* does not mention pharmacopoeia, aphrodisiacs and anaphrodisiacs so common in these other texts, and instead focuses on the relation between spiritual accomplishments and the sexual health of Pa Sulong's students. Perhaps the closest analogy to the *Ilmu Akhirat* in the material found in those other texts can be found in a '*doa*' against a 'tyrannical immodest' coitus impediment, a '*setan* [army of Iblis] at night', within the '*Bab ini keras zakar*' from *Rejang Ketika dari Kelantan*.

In that text, an erect penis is associated with the spiritual sensation of 'employing the hard [end of] *Baginda Ali*' that is able to stab and split rocks, stab and crash the earth, and 'intends to undertake the path to [the sexually submissive] *Siti Pat* [Lady Fatima] once or thrice'.[103]

This chapter has suggested that sources such as the *Ilmu Akhirat* can help us reconstruct a vision of sacred descent in the line of ʿAlī, in which esotericism, spiritual elitism and coital rituals were aimed at preserving lineage as well as generating spiritual sensations and facilitating mystical ascent within one particular community in nineteenth-century Malaya. In examining this Malay erotic manual here, I have aimed to add some new material to our growing source base on manifestations of ʿAlid piety in the region, as well as to make a humble contribution to a field of scholarship on Islam that has increasingly approached sexual bodies and organs as sites that generate religious meanings, religious hierarchies, saintliness, communal boundaries and sacred power.

PART 3

MODALITIES OF ʿALID PIETY AND CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS IN THE MODERN PERIOD

9

‘THEY ARE THE HEIRS OF THE PROPHET’

DISCOURSES ON THE *AHL AL-BAYT* AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AMONG THE BĀ ʿALAWĪ IN MODERN INDONESIA

Ismail Fajrie Alatas

‘They are the heirs of the Prophet (*ulā’ika wurrāth al-nabī*)’, exclaimed the eighteenth-century Bā ʿAlawī luminary, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d.1719), in his oft-quoted poem. Since then, this phrase has been constantly evoked in Bā ʿAlawī texts to describe the *ahl al-bayt* and their descendants. This particular poem of al-Ḥaddād has seen numerous deployments, interpretations and elaborations in the process of locating the primacy of the Prophet’s family as foundational to Islam.

This chapter examines the Bā ʿAlawī discourse of the *ahl al-bayt* in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Indonesia. Bā ʿAlawī is a term used to designate the descendants of the Prophet (*sayyid*, pl. *sādā*) who hailed from the Ḥaḍramawt valley in Yemen and have long settled in the Indian Ocean littorals, including Southeast Asia. More specifically, this chapter focuses on the ways in which Bā ʿAlawī scholars have deployed the *ahl al-bayt* as a discursive category to formulate a vision of religious authority in communication with the broader modern contestations over diverse modes of religious authority in

modern Indonesia. By looking at three texts written by Bā ʿAlawī scholars at different historical junctures, I attempt to chart a diachronic development of the discourse on the *ahl al-bayt* and its relation to religious authority.

The three scholars are chosen because they have been acknowledged by their peers, as well as the broader Indonesian Muslim community, to be the leading representatives of the Bā ʿAlawī tradition. The texts I will analyse in this chapter are: (1) the collected discourses of the saint of Bogor, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās (d.1933), from the 1920s and 1930s; (2) *Iḥyaʾ al-mayt bi faḍāʾil ahl al-bayt* (Reviving the Dead Through the Virtues of the Ahl al-bayt) written in the 1950s/1960s by Sālim b. Aḥmad Ibn Jindān (d.1969); and (3) *Qul hadhihi sabīlī* (Say: This is My Way)—a treatise developed from a lecture delivered by Jindān b. Nawfal Ibn Jindān in 2006. The adoption of discourse analysis, rather than a purely exegetical approach, is useful for highlighting the formative status of discourse as 'tools of power contentions', as well as the dialogical character of the three texts. In turn, discourse analysis can be a fruitful method for historical analysis in that it enables the observation of shifting configurations in the broader discursive arena.[1] Before delving into these texts, some introductory comments on the Bā ʿAlawī and their *ṭarīqa* (Sufi path school) is needed, and to this I shall now turn.

The Bā ʿAlawī and their ṭarīqa

Bā ʿAlawī ('children of ʿAlawī') is a term used to denote those descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad (*sayyids*) via the ʿAlid line who settled in the Ḥaḍramawt valley of South Arabia. As the formative history of the Bā ʿAlawī has been the subject of several monographs, it will not be discussed here.[2] One vital development, however, does require some discussion, that is, the institution of the Bā ʿAlawī's own Sufi path (*ṭarīqa*).

The Bā ʿAlawī scholar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (d.1255) instituted the Ṭarīqa ʿAlawīyya (the 'Bā ʿAlawī path') in the thirteenth century. Engseng Ho has defined the *ṭarīqa* as a complex of constitutive elements—a canon of saints, texts, rituals, sacred places and genealogies—which, when combined, generated and transmitted normative understandings of moral order. As a complex, the *ṭarīqa* is a 'malleable discourse' that evolves as it confronts new historical contexts.[3] The Bā ʿAlawī luminary ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d.1719) delineated the *ṭarīqa* as imitating the Prophet, both internally and externally, by following the footsteps of the *ahl al-bayt* and studying the *ḥadīth*.[4] This articulation of Sufism in the contour of Prophetic and ʿAlid piety afforded the

Bā ʿAlawī a position of prestige, which added to their intrinsic quality of being heirs to the Prophet. Hence, they could present their intimate knowledge of the Prophet's words and deeds through the *silsila dhahabiyya* (the golden chain)—the chain of knowledge transmitted internally through the family from father to son without external mediation.

By the eighteenth century, Bā ʿAlawī migrants had settled in various parts of Southeast Asia where their prestigious genealogy and scholarly credentials accelerated their integration into local elite kinships, forming a Creole cultural nexus. New technologies developed in the late nineteenth century, such as print, telegraph and steam travel, facilitating new social and political developments; as argued by Michael Feener, amongst others, these developments not only assisted colonial expansion, but also created new opportunities for connections and exchanges of ideas among Muslims.[5] One result of these developments was the dissemination of Islamic reformism, as developed in Egypt, which was borne out of the interaction between Muslim scholars and European modernity.[6] Challenging the epistemological bases of traditional Islamic thought and practice, Islamic reformism bypassed the authority of established scholars and their scholastic tradition, by arguing for direct access to the scriptures.

The same technological developments precipitated a surge in Ḥaḍramī migration to Southeast Asia. While migration was previously limited to relatively small numbers of Bā ʿAlawī and other wealthy Ḥaḍramīs, cheaper steam travel made the crossing possible to more members of the lower and poorer social groups. In the urban centres of the Dutch East Indies and Singapore, many Ḥaḍramīs, whether Bā ʿAlawī or those of a more modest background, rose to prominence as they benefited from the expanding colonial modernity. The result was what Ulrike Freitag has termed the 'Ḥaḍramī renaissance', characterised by the emergence of three modern organisational forms—associations, modern schools and journals.[7] Together, they ushered the creation of 'a new form of public sphere which became dominated by a novel type of public person, the intellectual [...]'.[8] These different developments, in turn, brought about the materialisation of new knowledge structures, based on a modern understanding of rationality, which attempted to move believers from parochial ties—cultural and religious alike—to a common standard of practice and ethics that provided a basis for the community in the new urban context of modern life.

The advent of colonial modernity and the consequent possibilities for obtaining increased wealth gifted some Ḥaḍramīs in the East Indies with an

elevated social standing. This new form of authority contributed to the development of critical attitudes among the wealthy non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs towards Bā ʿAlawī dominance[9]—sentiments which found their strongest articulation in the idea of egalitarianism as preached by Islamic reformism. Thus, in 1915, several Ḥaḍramī modernists established Jamʿiyyat al-Iṣlāḥ wa'al-Irshād al-ʿArabiyya (The Arab Association for Reform and Guidance), better known as al-Irshād.[10] The intense clashes between al-Irshād and the Bā ʿAlawī involved high-profile public polemics. While the Irshadi–Bā ʿAlawī conflict concerns the Ḥaḍramīs in the Dutch East Indies, it is important to note, however, that such contestations reflect the broader reconfiguration of religious authority in the Muslim world.

ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās: explicating the hidden vicegerency

Modern discursive contestations over religious authority posed an immediate challenge to the more 'traditional' Bā ʿAlawī scholars such as ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās (d.1933). In contrast to the modern reformists, Ibn Muḥsin clung to the *ṭarīqa's* paradigm of religiosity, campaigning for the internalisation of Islam, traditional education and the veneration of the *ahl al-bayt*. Most of his discourses concern the understanding of sainthood and sanctity, of mystical epistemology such as the 'spiritual tasting',[11] of certainty and illumination, and most importantly of the spiritual gravity of the *ahl al-bayt*. Ibn Muḥsin's discourses, therefore, can be seen as an attempt to counter some of the challenges of modernity. While the reformists were offering egalitarian readings of Islam and championing the idea of virtue and honour based on deeds instead of descent, Ibn Muḥsin presented a construction of religious authority that stood in contrast to the reformists' visions, highlighting the exalted position of the Prophet's family, which resulted from their physical and spiritual connection to the Prophet.

Ibn Muḥsin was born in the town of Ḥawra, Ḥaḍramawt, in 1848.[12] During his youth, he studied under several scholars from the al-ʿAṭṭās family as well as other Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Ḥaḍramawt. In 1865, he left for the Hejaz to resume his studies, but after just one year, Ibn Muḥsin decided to travel to Java for 'mercantile reasons' (*asbāb al-tijāra*).[13] He first settled in Pekalongan, Central Java, and then moved to study with a Bā ʿAlawī scholar named Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamza al-ʿAṭṭās (d.1886) in Batavia, where he stayed several years before finally moving to Bogor. There, in 1900, he built a mosque next to his house which he named al-Nūr and which was constantly filled with visi-

Fig. 9.1: The tomb of ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās, d.1933

tors and students who came from different places to study and seek his blessings. Among his notable students were Ḥasan Fadʿaq, a Meccan *sayyid* who later became the spiritual adviser to Amir Fayṣal of Hijaz (d.1933); and ʿAlawī b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād (d.1962), who became the *mufti* of Johor. Other students of Ibn Muḥsin included ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥabashī (d.1968), who was the founder of Islamic Centre Kwitang; ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAṭṭās, the author of *Tāj al-aʿrās*; Sālim b. Aḥmad b. Jindān; and the local scholar K. H. Abdullah Syafe'i. Ibn Muḥsin whom passed away in 1933 and was buried next to his own mosque. A domed mausoleum was built on his grave, which still remains a popular pilgrimage destination. Each year, on the last Wednesday of Rabīʿ al-Awwal, a public pilgrimage (*ziyāra*) attracts thousands of people.

While Ibn Muḥsin himself never wrote any books (except for a collection of poetry), his teachings and speeches were assembled by his students in compilations, providing snippets of what took place in his gatherings. The text that is most relevant to the topic of this chapter is a manuscript entitled *Wizanāt al-qisṭās min al-durar wa al-yāqūt wa al-almāṣ min azkā al-anfās* (Balancing Scale of Pearls, Rubies and Diamonds of Purified Exhalation),

Fig. 9.2: An-Nur Mosque, built by ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās, Bogor (photo by Ismail Alatas)

which is an anonymous anthology containing: (1) a *manāqib* and a compilation of speeches by ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad al-Haddād; (2) another compilation of ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad ʿArfān Bārajā; (3) collected poems of Ibn Muḥsin; and (4) Ibn Muḥsin's correspondence.[14] In what follows, I shall reconstruct Ibn Muḥsin's discourse on the *ahl al-bayt* and its connection with his conception of religious authority.

In discussing the *ahl al-bayt*, Ibn Muḥsin is mainly concerned with the epistemic status of the *ahl al-bayt* as the exclusive repository of Prophetic knowledge. In explaining a *ḥadīth* reporting the Prophet's exhortation to Ḥasan, 'O Ḥasan, take him', when the latter was wrestling with his brother, Ḥusayn, Ibn Muḥsin affirmed that:

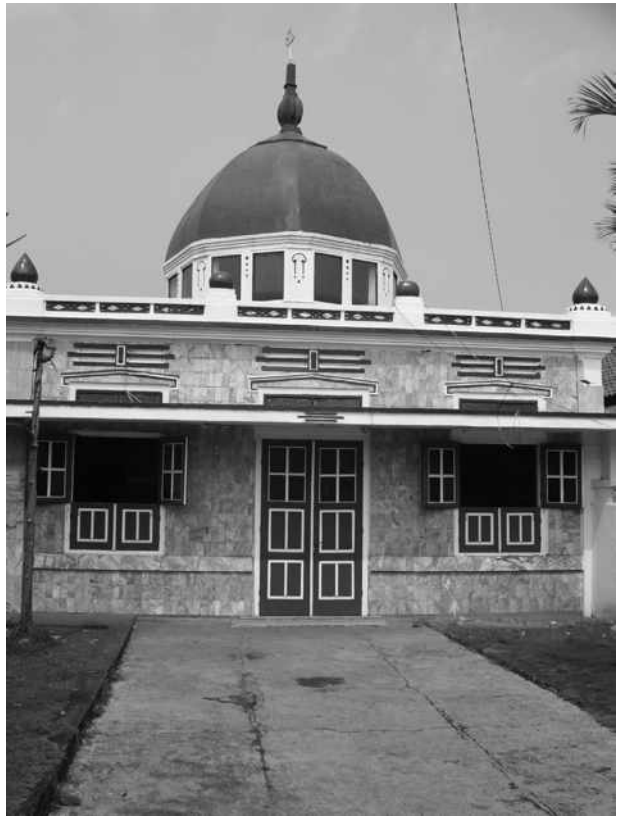


Fig. 9.3: The Mausoleum of ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās, Bogor (photo by Ismail Alatas)

> this is a sign (*ishāra*) that the descendants of Ḥasan will in the future assume manifest leadership (*al-riyāsa al-ẓāhira*). While the descendants of Ḥusayn, will take on the hidden vicegerency (*al-khilāfa al-bāṭina*). This is because [when the Prophet instructed Ḥasan to take his brother?], the angel Jibrīl covertly whispered to Ḥusayn, 'O Ḥusayn, take him'![15]

Here, Ibn Muḥsin seemingly argues that the succession of leadership from the Prophet is being transmitted to his descendants, in which the Ḥasanī lineage will assume the external leadership of the community while the Ḥusaynī lineage will perform the esoteric leadership. One reason for the *ahl al-bayt's* strong spiritual potential, according to Ibn Muḥsin, is their participation in the Prophet's night journey and ascension (*al-isrā' wa al-miʿrāj*). Bārajā, the

compiler of this text, asked Ibn Muḥsin about ʿAlī al-Ḥabshī's[16] writings, in which al-Ḥabshī characterised Habīb Aḥmad[17] as having reached the stage of the knowledge of God 'who took His servant for a journey by night':[18]

> He [Ibn Muḥsin], may God be pleased with him, answered: 'Yes, he was travelling with the Prophet on the night journey in the Prophet's marrow.'
>
> I [Bārajā] asked him again: 'Can we characterise every member of the *ahl al-bayt* in this manner'?
>
> He, may God be pleased with him, said: 'Those characteristics only referred to exceptional people from among the *ahl al-bayt* [...] Secrets (*sirr*) did not emerge except in certain individuals from among them.'[19]

While not every member of the *ahl al-bayt* can be characterised as being with the Prophet on the night journey, it is evident here that exceptional spiritual potential can only be realised by those from his progeny. This does not mean, however, that only the *ahl al-bayt* can assume an elevated spiritual rank. When al-Ḥaddād asked Ibn Muḥsin whether it was possible for a person not from the *ahl al-bayt* to become the axial saint (*quṭb*), the latter replied that it was possible, albeit in his capacity as a representative of one of the *ahl al-bayt*.[20] This indicates that according to Ibn Muḥsin, connection to the Prophet is the crucial prerequisite for attaining a lofty spiritual and intellectual state. While those from the *ahl al-bayt* are automatically connected by virtue of being part of his marrow, others must forge a connection with him through his descendants.

The need to forge bonds with the *ahl al-bayt* is crucial because the family of the Prophet is equipped with what Ibn Muḥsin has termed as the 'knowledge of fear' (*ʿilm al-khashyah*). This knowledge is not something that one strives for, but is simply given to the *ahl al-bayt*, who then have the ability to transmit it to others. This, I would argue, is a cardinal point as it highlights the fundamental difference between Ibn Muḥsin's vision of religious authority and that of the reformists. Ibn Muḥsin states:

> Fear of Allāh (*khashya*) is a knowledge that is not acquired through striving (*lā taʾtī min jihat al-kasb*). It is acquired through bestowal and Divine effusion (*al-faḍl wa al-fayḍ al-ilāhī*). When knowledge is suffused with fear, it effulges light to the material world. The knowledge of God is linked to fear. Anyone who does not fear God is not a scholar of the hereafter (*ʿulamāʾ al-ākhira*). The lights of reality (*haqīqa*) do not obstruct the lights of *sharīʿa*. Rather the former reinforces the latter.[21]

For Ibn Muḥsin, therefore, the main distinctive character of the *ahl al-bayt* is epistemic. They are given, by virtue of their genealogical connection to the Prophet, congenital knowledge and spiritual potentialities, which are then

realised by certain personalities. While this vision seems highly exclusive, Ibn Muḥsin opens the possibility of others benefitting from this knowledge through their connection to the *ahl al-bayt*. For Ibn Muḥsin, it is this inborn knowledge that can transform one's acquired knowledge so that it can be made meaningful to others, in the same way that light illuminates its surroundings. This epistemic distinction, in turn, positions the *ahl al-bayt* as the soundest religious authority for the broader Muslim community.

There is a similarity between Ibn Muḥsin's understanding of the *ahl al-bayt* and the discourse of the *Jazūliyya* Sufi order as discussed by Vincent Cornell. Cornell has demonstrated the conflation of two different ideologies in the new conception of sainthood proposed by ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghazwānī (d.1529): that of the paradigmatic sainthood taken from Ibn ʿArabī (d.1240), and that of the Sharifian authority of the Idrisids. The result was a new manifestation of the potent sainthood that combined genealogical descent to the Prophet with elevated spiritual station.[22] Ibn Muḥsin, too, has highlighted the importance of the combination of Prophetic genealogy with spiritual station to produce an authoritative conception of authority. Read in the context of the dissemination of reformist discourses based on the new knowledge structure, it seems probable that Ibn Muḥsin draws this distinction to differentiate the authoritativeness of Bā ʿAlawī's transmission of knowledge from that of their modernist opponents.

Ibn Muḥsin further explains:

> The *ahl al-bayt* are the gate of the repositories of secrets. The key is with them. All of the laws (*al-aḥkām*) are extended from them. This is because they are the bearers of the Qurʾan while the others are surrogates in its inheritance. There are two different kinds of secrets (*sirr*): the secret of inheritance (*sirr al-wirātha*), possessed by them [the *ahl al-bayt*]; and the secret of the *Sharīʿa* which is possessed by them and others.[23]

Here, we see another epistemic distinction carefully delineated by Ibn Muḥsin. He then explains what is meant by the 'secret of inheritance' (*sirr al-wirātha*):

> the materials of the inheritance [...] are none other than the ordeals that were faced by the *ahl al-bayt* in the forms of numerous events and insults from their enemies as well as other calamities. [These ordeals function] to sanctify them because purification has already been decreed upon them from before.[24] And because of that, on the Day of Judgment they will be gathered in an already purified state [...] Included among the *ahl al-bayt* are those who follow them and abide by the Muhammadan *Sharīʿa*. Because of that, they become one group. Everyone who follows the *Sharīʿa*, whether in the form of injunction or prohibition, will then be

> counted among the *ahl al-bayt*. But they, like Salmān, are not *ahl al-bayt* based on spiritual lineage. But if someone unites both the spiritual and physical lineages, then that is the perfect one.[25]

From this passage, it is clear that for Ibn Muḥsin, the experience of opposition to the *ahl al-bayt* is part and parcel of their unique status, that is, as part of the purification that the Qurʾan has hinted at. In addition, Ibn Muḥsin opens the category of *ahl al-bayt* to those not biologically linked to the Prophet. He offers three categories of *ahl al-bayt*: the lesser are those who adhere to the *sharīʿa*, then come those who have a spiritual connection to them, while the highest category is reserved for those who have the spiritual lineage as well as the clan (biological) connection to the Prophet. Such a delineation demonstrates the two aspects of Ibn Muḥsin's discourse on the *ahl al-bayt*. On the one hand, he opens the category to include those who follow the *sharīʿa*, and to those who have spiritual connections to the *ahl al-bayt*. On the other hand, he secures the highest and most perfect manifestation of the *ahl al-bayt* for those who possess both the spiritual and genealogical connections.

As following the teachings of the a*hl al-bayt*, and forging a connection with them, elevates one's spiritual state, Ibn Muḥsin stresses the imperative to love and follow their footsteps:

> Those who love the *ahl al-bayt*—by virtue of their love will beget closeness to them. Once they are close to the *ahl al-bayt*, they will love their way (*ṭarīqatahum*). And once they love their way, verily they will repent from their misdeeds. This is becase the act of following them is only possible after repentance. As for the cause of repentence, it is the transformation of bad deeds into good deeds.[26]

Here Ibn Muḥsin explicitly connects the spiritual gravity of the *ahl al-bayt* to his vision of religious authority. There is an alchemical quality, according to Ibn Muḥsin, to the act of loving the *ahl al-bayt*, in a way that such an act can turn a sinner into a virtuous individual.[27] Ibn Muḥsin emphasises that loving the *ahl al-bayt* is the prerequisite to access the path of the Prophet. In other words, the *ahl al-bayt* are the most authoritative source of Islamic knowledge precisely because they are able to connect people to the Prophet. In contrast, those who dislike or hate the *ahl al-bayt* will only harm themselves. Ibn Muḥsin explains:

> The inconspicuousness of the *ahl al-bayt* among humankind is a form of grace for humankind. Otherwise, if their rank was fully manifest, it would become obligatory for human kind to respect and venerate them. This, however, is something that most human beings cannot do. Thus, what is manifested is only their human characters, while their prominence remain hidden. Loving the *ahl al-bayt* is the first

> foundation for the unveiling of the veil and for the emergence of light in every human being. This light is what guided them to the right path. Disliking the *ahl al-bayt* will only result in the contrary.[28]

While loving the *ahl al-bayt* will result in felicity, disliking them will have dire consequences. Such a threat can be perceived from an excerpt of a conversation between Ibn Muḥsin and his pupil Bārajā below:

> I [Bārajā] asked him [Ibn Muḥsin] about the strong threat for those who hate the *ahl al-bayt* as stated in the sayings of Habīb ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād:
>
> Those who hate the *ahl al-bayt*,
> are amused by illusion during their life
> And once they die,
> They would feel torment and duress
>
> [Bārajā asked Ibn Muḥsin] Is this threat absolute?
>
> He [Ibn Muḥsin] replied:
>
> No. That threat is only aimed at those who hate the *ahl al-bayt* for their essence as *ahl al-bayt*. If someone hates a *sayyid* because he is from the *ahl al-bayt*, then this threat applies to him. But if one hates a member of the *ahl al-bayt* because of a vice that he has, then he is not counted as those for whom this threat applies.[29]

What is implied in Ibn Muḥsin's reply is perhaps a reference to those who attempt to denigrate the special rank, status and authority of the *ahl al-bayt*. Here, it is useful to remember that Ibn Muḥsin lived during the period when the Bā ʿAlawī religious authority was being increasingly questioned by the more egalitarian reformists, as mentioned above. It seems very probable then that those who criticised the Bā ʿAlawī's special status would be considered as those who 'dislike the *ahl al-bayt* for their rank', and would thus be counted among the addressees of this threat. If this was the case, and I tend to believe it was, it means that Ibn Muḥsin's reply was a counter-attack on the reformists' thoughts and agendas, which included their new conception of religious authority.

It seems quite clear that Ibn Muḥsin champions the superior authority of the *ahl al-bayt*. For Ibn Muḥsin, ʿAlid piety is defined as an acknowledgement of the *ahl al-bayt* as the most authoritative source of Islamic knowledge which, in turn, stipulates the need to love them and follow their guidance. In other words, the way of the *ahl al-bayt* is synonymous with the Prophetic path. By following the *ahl al-bayt*, a Muslim is able to attain an elevated spiritual station.

While Ibn Muḥsin's discourse was appreciated among his followers and students, it became a point of contention for the more egalitarian reformists. Kazuhiro Arai, in his study of the al-ʿAṭṭās family, noted how Ibn Muḥsin himself frequently became a target of criticism. The most famous of this was

the debacle with Yūnus al-Baḥrī, the editor of the Arabic newspaper *al-Ḥaqq*. Al-Baḥrī, also known as *al-saʾiḥ al-ʿIrāqī* ('the Iraqi traveller'), was born in Mosul and came to Java in 1931, where he published this newspaper and became one of the most strident critics of the Bā ʿAlawī.[30]

In one article, al-Baḥrī described Ibn Muḥsin as 'a man who suggests evil thoughts to the hearts of men',[31] and such outright accusations against Ibn Muḥsin angered many Bā ʿAlawīs and those sympathetic to them. Letters defending Ibn Muḥsin were published in an Arabic newspaper in Surabaya from November 1932 to January 1933.[32] Al-Baḥrī was finally deported for an unspecified reason by the Dutch authorities at the end of 1932. While the criticism against Ibn Muḥsin sparked anger from many prominent Ḥaḍramīs in the East Indies, Ibn Muḥsin did not involve himself in the conflict.[33]

Another piece of evidence of the contention that Ibn Muḥsin's discourse sparked can be found in the *Tāj al-Aʿrās*. Here, it is written that there was a man from the desert of Ḥaḍramawt—an area known for its brigands (*quṭṭāʿ al-ṭarīq*)—who migrated to Java and attended the gathering of Ibn Muḥsin.[34] One day, a person 'envious of the *ahl al-bayt*' came up to him and said, 'the Bā ʿAlawī only discuss their ancestors and their deeds in their books; they never talk about your ancestors'. In the following gathering, the man asked Ibn Muḥsin why his ancestors were never mentioned. This, according to the man, was injustice (*ẓulm*). However, Ibn Muḥsin replied that he had mentioned the man's ancestors, although not explicitly. Ibn Muḥsin then recited a poem about the vices of brigandage and robbery while pointing to the man, as if he was talking about the man's ancestors, and concluded: 'the scholars do not leave anything out nor do they perform injustices'. The man left, but after a few days, he returned to Ibn Muḥsin and became a follower again.[35]

This story indicates how Ibn Muḥsin's gatherings, in which he held study sessions, did not stay stable. As a scholar with an elitist perspective regarding religious authority, these gatherings became sites of pedagogy of the special rank of the *ahl al-bayt*, but also sites of contestation. His explicit discourse on the spiritual and epistemic significance of the *ahl al-bayt* meant that he positioned himself as a target of the opposition and criticism of the egalitarian-minded Muslims. This, in turn, indicates the dialogic character of Ibn Muḥsin's discourse. That is, his emphasis on the spiritual gravity of the *ahl al-bayt*, and the importance of establishing relationships with them, was part of an attempt to counter some of the challenges of modernity. Thus, Ibn Muḥsin's discourse should be seen as having a formative quality, as it reconstructed what ʿAlid piety meant in a shifting discursive arena.

Sālim b. Aḥmad bin Jindān: restoring lives, reviving souls

In the 1950s, a new evocative context, different from that faced by Ibn Muḥsin, and involving one of his students, Sālim b. Aḥmad b. Jindān (d.1969), emerged. The 1940s and 1950s marked an era characterised by increasing demands of Muslim reformists for the purification of local practices, as manifested in various moves to return to the scriptural foundations of Islam. While such developments shared the same egalitarian agenda as the modernists of Ibn Muḥsin's days, they further championed the study of *ḥadīth* as an avenue to democratise the transmission of Islamic knowledge.[36] Prior to this, the critical study of *ḥadīth* was rarely taught in the *pesantren*, and thus the move toward the study of *ḥadīth* as a direct source of law marked a shift in the recognition of authority,[37] by directly grasping the *ḥadīth*, scholastic traditions were bypassed. Moreover, the reformists' *isnād* were derived not from traditional chains, but from 'new media forms, new educational methods and new intellectual derivations'.[38] This new reconfiguration of religious authority therefore posed another challenge to the authority of the Bā ʿAlawī; while authority was based on direct engagement with the scriptures for the reformists, this was founded on genealogy and metaphysical beliefs for the Bā ʿAlawī.

Against this challenge, Ibn Muḥsin's student, Sālim b. Aḥmad bin Jindān, devised a new method of projecting the Bā ʿAlawī authority and reestablishing ʿAlid piety. Ibn Jindān defended the authoritative form of *ḥadīth* studies by employing discourses familiar to the reformists while framing it in such a way as to express the Bā ʿAlawī's eminent authority. Born in Surabaya in 1906, Ibn Jindān was first educated in a government school (*volkschool*). He continued his schooling in a Khayriyya institution[39] before travelling extensively around the archipelago to study under numerous scholars, the eminent shaykh Cholil of Madura being one of them.[40] In 1935, he embarked on a year-long tour of the archipelago, collecting *ḥadīth* and historical sources while preaching, and often delivered fiery speeches on devotion to God and the Prophet.[41] A hallmark of his oratory was that when quoting a *ḥadīth*, he always included its complete chain of transmission (*isnād*). Such a practice reaffirmed Ibn Jindān's position as a *muḥaddith* (*ḥadīth* scholar) in Indonesia, thereby helping him to establish credentials that could be enthusiastically recognised by modern reformists. In 1940, Ibn Jindān migrated to Jakarta, where he instructed his students in the science of *ḥadīth* and *daʿwa* methodology.[42]

Ibn Jindān was productive in his publications. Here, I shall limit my analysis to a text entitled *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt bi faḍāʾil ahl al-bayt* (Reviving the Dead Through the Virtues of the *Ahl al-bayt*), in which he discussed the eminence

Fig. 9.4: Sālim b. Aḥmad b. Jindān, 1906–1969 (Collection of al-Fakhriyyah Library, Jakarta)

of the *ahl al-bayt*.[43] Ibn Jindān's choice of this title can be read as an attempt to position himself in the *ḥadīth* paradigm, as the same title was used as the appellation of a collection of 60 *ḥadīth*s on the virtues of the Prophet's family, compiled by the fifteenth-century Egyptian polymath, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d.1505).

Ibn Jindān makes explicit the reason for writing this text from the very beginning, noting that:

> What propelled me in composing this book is when I saw many sweepers of the *ahl al-bayt*, disposing the meaning of *ahl al-bayt* to the meaning they want to insist upon, to lead astray the ignorant in this country. And they interpret to people 'the verse of purification' (*ayat al-taṭhīr*),[44] in such a way that the term *ahl al-bayt* is used to signify the wives of the Prophet. The *Umma* of the past and those who came after

> are in agreement (*ijmāʿ*) that the term *ahl al-bayt* in the revelation is bestowed on the house descended from him, who peace and blessings be upon, as reported in the hadiths of *zakā*, and *khums* and the hadith of *al-thaqalayn*. And that the *ayat al-taṭhīr* was revealed and descended to the people of the cloak (*ahl al-kisāʾ*) as referred to in the hadith of Umm Salama and Abī Saʿīd al-Khuḍrī and Ibn ʿAbbās in the two *Saḥīhs*; they are ʿAlī and Fāṭima and Ḥasan and Ḥusayn while the fifth is the Prophet.[45]

In a clear and concise manner, Ibn Jindān explained how during that time, there were people who tried to reinterpret the meaning of *ahl al-bayt* as stated in the Qurʾan to be the Prophet's wives rather than his descendants. While he did not mention who these people were, it can be inferred that he was referring to his Indonesian contemporaries. In fact, interpreting the verse of purification, both the reformists Hamka and Hasbi Ash Shiddiqi, who were Ibn Jindān's contemporaries, have argued that the term *ahl al-bayt* denoted all the wives and family of the Prophet.[46] In refuting such claims, Ibn Jindān builds his argument by specifying (*takhṣīṣ*) Qurʾanic verses with the aid of the *ḥadīth*, establishing an argument stating that what is referred to by *ahl al-bayt* are exclusively the 'people of the cloak' and their descendants.

Ibn Jindān further describes the problem he seeks to redress:

> Many of them rejected the existence of their descendants and the honourable people (*shurafāʾ*) in this country. They repudiate the fact that we are from them. And they tamper with history. They said that Ḥasan and Ḥusayn's descendants were cut off, that it is not possible for both of them to have descendants today.[47]

Again, although Ibn Jindān is vague in directing his accusations, it seems evident that he is bothered by discourses floating among Indonesian Muslims which question the existence of the *ahl al-bayt* as well as the validity of the Bā ʿAlawī claim to such a status. Furthermore, by claiming that even the Kharijites believe in the existence of the progenies, Ibn Jindān implies that whoever argues differently is worse than this secessionist sect:

> The entire *Umma*, even the Kharijites, have united on the existence of the progenies (*al-ʿitra*) and the continuity of the Prophetic descendants until the end of days. And that the *Ahl al-Sunna waʾl-Jamāʿa* believes, like Shāfiʿī, in the coming of the *Mahdī*, the awaited one, and that he will be from the children of Fāṭima who will come at the end of time. So how then, can the *Mahdī* come if there are no descendants of Fāṭima at the end of times?[48]

In the first chapter, Ibn Jindān explains the three meanings of *ahl al-bayt*. In its first meaning, 'which is referred to by the Prophet in the numerous *ḥadīth*s, and is emphasised and bequeathed to his *umma*, [they] are those who

descended from him through Fāṭima from the children of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn'.[49] Ibn Jindān argues that the Prophet explicitly declared the children of ʿAlī to be his children, while reminding his reader of a Qurʾanic verse prohibiting a believer from questioning the decree of God and His Prophet.[50] In addition, Ibn Jindān listed several *ḥadīth*s stating that the Prophet had identified himself as 'the father of the progenies in meaning' (*abū al-ʿitra fī al-maʿnā*), while ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib remained their biological father.[51]

Ibn Jindān then discusses the meaning of the Qurʾanic verse, 'Your opponent will be the loser' (*inna shāniʾaka huwa al-abtar*) (108:3). This verse was revealed when the Prophet was ridiculed by his infidel uncle, Abū Lahab, following his son's death. As not having a son was a source of shame in Arab societies, God consoled the Prophet that he would have descendants, and those who ridiculed him would be the ones whose lineages would be cut off.[52] Furthermore, by arguing that this verse is perspicuous (*muḥkam*) and unequivocal, Ibn Jindān maintains that refusing to believe in it would result in apostasy.[53]

Ibn Jindān explained that when the Prophet received the revelation of the 'verse of purification', he called ʿAlī, Fāṭima, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and enveloped them in a cloak saying, 'O God! these are my *ahl al-bayt*' (*Allāhumma Hāʾulā ahl baytī*). When one of the Prophet's wives, Umm Salama, asked to be included, the Prophet declined while saying, 'You are in goodness' (*anti ʿalā khayr*).[54] Bringing this tradition as witness, Ibn Jindān refutes those who claimed the *ahl al-bayt* as including the wives of the Prophet. Although this occurrence specifies who the *ahl al-bayt* are, Ibn Jindān extends his argument to propose that the categorisation of *ahl al-bayt* should also include the descendants of the people of the cloak. This argument is supported by the understanding that the *ahl al-bayt* exists throughout history, itself being an extrapolation from the prophetic tradition, 'Educate your children to love my *ahl al-bayt*', which would indicate that the *umma* is under obligation (*mukallafīn*) to love the *ahl al-bayt* in every place and time.[55]

Only in the last two pages of the chapter does Ibn Jindān finally elaborate on the second and third meanings of the *ahl al-bayt*. While the second meaning is reserved for the wives of the Prophet, the third is for those who lived with him, including servants and slaves such as ʿUsāma b. Zayd and Salmān al-Fārisī. While these are indeed considered *ahl al-bayt*, Ibn Jindān asserts that these three interpretations should also be understood as denoting degrees of relative rank. Thus, the wives of the Prophet are in the second rank when related to the people of the cloak and their descendants.[56]

In the second chapter, Ibn Jindān examines the meaning of *āl* (family) in the phrase *āli Muḥammad*, whom Muslims around the world send their blessings to during the daily prayers. Drawing on the works of several lexicographers, Ibn Jindān defines *āl* to mean immediate family, as in the Qurʾanic phrase, *āli ʿImrān* or *āli Yaʿqūb*. Here, as in the preceding chapter, he limits the definition of *āli Muḥammad* to denote Fāṭima, ʿAlī and their two sons. Moreover, Ibn Jindān discusses several poems of al-Shāfiʿī, noting that the imām, whose *madhhab* is adhered to in Indonesia, is explicit about his love and admiration of the Prophet's family. He quotes al-Shāfiʿi (d.820) to reinforce his point that *āli Muḥammad* is synonymous with the *ahl al-bayt*:

O *ahl al-bayt* of the Messenger, loving you,
Is a duty from God, mentioned in the Qurʾan.
In your honour, it is sufficient that one's prayer,
Is incomplete without praying for blessings on you.[57]

As al-Shāfiʿī's poem indicates, the *āli Muḥammad* to whom Muslims send their daily blessings is specifically the *ahl al-bayt*. Ibn Jindān goes on to discuss how al-Shāfiʿī considers himself as a partisan (*shīʿa*) of the *ahl al-bayt*. In one of his poems, al-Shāfiʿī writes:

I call to witness, in the name of Mecca,
The al-Ḥaṭīm and the well of Zamzam,[58]
And the camels as they walk to Minā,
Hatred of the legatee (*al-waṣī*) is a written sign,
Appearing on the foreheads of illegitimate children,
Whoever among people does not accept the custodianship of Ḥaydar [ʿAlī]
Then to God, his prayer and his fornications are the same.[59]

Ibn Jindān concludes the chapter by emphasising two points: firstly, that al-Shāfiʿī's poem clarifies that the *āli Muḥammad* equates with the *ahl al-bayt*; and secondly, that the other poem demonstrates, according to Ibn Jindān, that 'al-Shāfiʿī recognises the custodianship of ʿAlī, and believes that ʿAlī [is] the legatee of the Prophet'.[60]

Finally, in the third chapter, Ibn Jindān discusses the definition of progeny (*al-ʿitrah*) as mentioned in the Prophetic *ḥadīth*.[61] As in the second chapter, Ibn Jindān describes the various opinions of the lexicographers leading to the conclusion that the *ʿitra* corresponds to the *ahl al-bayt*. Ibn Jindān also uses this opportunity to highlight two crucial issues from the aforementioned *ḥadīth*. The first is that the equal stations of the Qurʾan and the *ahl al-bayt* are clearly expressed, that is, the two are not only inseparable, but also occupy equal levels. The second is that by claiming that the two will be inseparable until the Day of

Judgement, it means that the *ahl al-bayt* is not a category exclusively used to denote Ḥasan, Ḥusayn and their parents, but also their descendants.[62] In conclusion, Ibn Jindān indirectly argues that the *ahl al-bayt* and their descendants are the most authoritative interlocutors of the scriptures.

While one can get the impression that Ibn Jindān was influenced by Shiʿism, it should also be stressed that he was not a Shiʿī. In a treatise entitled *Al-raʿa al-ghāmidha fī naqḍi kalām al-rāfiḍa*,[63] Ibn Jindān criticises those whom he terms as the *rāfiḍa*, or 'those who claim that they love the family of the Prophet but [...] do not acknowledge the virtue of the companions like Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān [...]'.[64] Ibn Jindān further explains that one of the habits of the *rafiḍa* is that they 'teach their children to curse the companions of the Prophet',[65] and drawing on the authority of the Lebanese *mufti*, Yūsuf al-Nabhānī, Ibn Jindān declares them as non-Muslims.[66] Furthermore, Ibn Jindān criticises the various practices of the *rafiḍa*. Firstly, he argues that they never invoke God or the Prophet, only reserving praise to ʿAlī.[67] Secondly, he criticises the mourning and sobbing during the commemoration of ʿĀshūrāʾ every 10th of Muḥarram 'as not befitting for any sane person'.[68] Thus, while Ibn Jindān clearly reserves special eminence to the *ahl al-bayt* and argues for their incomparable authority, he strongly disapproves of Shiʿī beliefs and practices, deeming them un-Islamic. What this indicates is the key difference between ʿAlid piety and Shiʿism. While ʿAlid piety can be defined as a modality of Islamic thought and practice that locates the means of accessing the Prophetic path through the mediation of his family and descendants, such a modality does not involve rejection or condemnation of the companions of the Prophet, nor does it involve the intense mourning during the commemoration of ʿĀshūrāʾ. These two differences are adequate to draw our attention to the differences between ʿAlid piety and Shiʿism.

Ibn Jindān, therefore, occupies an interesting position where he enunciates the prominence of the *ahl al-bayt* by negotiating between modern Islamic reformism, with its emphasis on *ḥadīth* studies, and Shiʿism. The reformists' reconfiguration of Islamic authority based on direct engagement with the scriptures compels Ibn Jindān to present the Bā ʿAlawī as the most authoritative interlocutors of the scriptures, and by directly accessing them, he also makes the case for the continual existence of the *ahl al-bayt*. Consequently, we witness a way of expressing the authority of the Bā ʿAlawī different from that of Ibn Muḥsin. For Ibn Jindān, ʿAlid piety is defined as understanding of the scriptures through the mediation of the *ahl al-bayt*, including acknowledging ʿAlī as the legatee of the Prophet, without having recourse to Shiʿism. In this

Fig. 9.5: Painting of Sālim b. Aḥmad b. Jindān (photo by Ismail Alatas from a painting in the collection of al-Fakhriyyah Library, Jakarta)

regard, al-Shāfiʿī is an exemplar of ʿAlid piety that Muslims in Indonesia should emulate. Finally, Ibn Jindān affirms ʿAlid piety as an obligation for every Muslim, as such a modality of piety is corroborated and instructed by the scriptures. In sum, while Ibn Jindān partakes in the reformist project of purifying local practices by championing a return to the scriptures, he simultaneously provides the scriptural bases for the authority of the *ahl al-bayt*, including the Bā ʿAlawī.

Jindān b. Nawfal b. Jindān: capturing the path

The negotiation between modern reformism and Shiʿism, which Ibn Jindān had to address, continued to inform the thought of his grandson, Jindān

b. Nawfal b. Sālim ibn Jindān, more than forty years after Ibn Jindān's death. During the 1990s, the re-establishment of connections between Indonesia and the Ḥaḍramawt after a long period of dormancy under the socialist regime became a conduit for diverse forms of Islamic belief and practice to Indonesia. The unification of Yemen in 1990 resulted in a relatively free political atmosphere, where different Islamic groups sought to secure an ideological niche for themselves amidst intense public contestations over the country's future and religio-political identity. One such group was the Salafi-oriented political party, al-Islaḥ. Ideologically and financially indebted to Saudi Arabia, al-Islaḥ presented itself as the bearer of orthopraxy, and launched virulent diatribes against 'traditionalist' scholars with Sufi orientations, including the Bā ʿAlawī of Ḥaḍramawt.[69] With Sufism thus portrayed as a religious deviation, backward-looking and the source of Muslim maladies,[70] the authority of the Bā ʿAlawī was once again being undermined.

Post-unification Yemen, however, also witnessed Sufi revivals such as those spearheaded by Habīb ʿUmar b. Ḥafīẓ, who founded a 'neo-traditional' acad-

Fig. 9.6: Habīb ʿUmar b. Ḥafīẓ, b.1962 (photo by Ismail Alatas)

emy, the Dār al-Muṣṭafā, in Tarim in 1996. Defending the Bā ʿAlawī's position as the bearer of authentic Islam, Habīb ʿUmar embarked on a campaign of reviving Sufism in Ḥaḍramawt after its long marginalisation under the socialist regime.[71] In addressing the Salafi condemnation of the Bā ʿAlawī for their alleged grave worship and hereditary privileges, Habīb ʿUmar presented the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawīyya* in the contours of orthopraxy, by emphasising the centrality of following the *sunna*, as a new manifestation of some trends earlier developed by Ibn Jindān. Such decisive re-imagination and re-shaping of the *ṭarīqa* enabled Habīb ʿUmar to minimise the importance of hagiographical narratives, ecstatic behaviour and mysticism associated with Sufism. Not only did he battle the Salafis in Yemen, he also embarked on international tours introducing a more *ḥadīth*-oriented Sufism as a counter-measure to the global dominance of Salafism.

One country that he has frequently visited since 1993 is Indonesia. During his first visit there, Habīb ʿUmar brought back with him forty young Indonesians to be educated in Ḥaḍramawt. In 1998, the first cohort of Habīb ʿUmar's students returned to Indonesia, bringing with them this new re-imagined orthopraxy. Faced with the similar context of a free atmosphere and expanding Salafi activism, these students began to deploy new strategies to reconfigure Bā ʿAlawī religious authority in a fashion more recognisable to the Salafis, and those affected by their teachings, in Indonesia.

Jindān b. Nawfal b. Jindān—Ibn Jindān's grandson—was one of these students. Born in 1977, he had studied with several Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Java before following Habīb ʿUmar to Ḥaḍramawt in 1993. As a vanguard in broader global struggles over Salafi and Shiʿī visions of Islam, Yemen became a site that shaped Jindān's intellectual outlook. Upon his return to Indonesia in 1998, Jindān's fame began to spread. He was perceived by the Bā ʿAlawī elders as the fresh face of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*—a powerful speaker able to capture the hearts and minds of the youths.

Upon his return to Indonesia, Jindān witnessed broad transformations of the Islamic discursive arena. The fragmentation of Islam into various ideologically conflicting groups meant that traditional scholarship ceased to be the only authoritative source of religious knowledge. While this has been the case for almost a century, in post-Suharto Indonesia new media and technologies were used by conflicting groups to draw people into their folds without the strong presence of a centralised state to mediate and control such a rapid development. Such was the case especially among the youths educated in secular universities who were more attracted to Salafism, inclining toward interna-

Fig. 9.7: Jindān b. Nawfal b. Jindān, b.1973 (photo by Ismail Alatas)

tional Islamist revivalist organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Ḥizb al-Tahrīr. These young reformers were hostile to local variants of Islam and traditional religious authority, and pursued increasingly activist agendas of Islamising society.

Another development that began in the Bā ʿAlawī circle, and then spread into wider circles, was Shiʿism. Shiʿism had a long but modest history in Indonesia. During the twentieth century, there were rising Shiʿī converts among the Bā ʿAlawī in Indonesia. However, it was the triumph of the 1979 Iranian Revolution that ushered in a new era where the Indonesian Shiʿī community became more self-conscious of its identity.[72] Shiʿism continued to develop beyond the Bā ʿAlawī circle. According to Zulkifli, its development took place at the intersections of 'education, kinship and friendship, and publications'.[73] The 1979 Revolution, therefore, marked a dramatic transformation of ʿAlid

piety in Indonesia, where such a modality of piety began to be, by some, associated with Imāmī Shiʿism.

In their missionary movement, Shiʿī activists never presented their thoughts under the label of Imāmī Shiʿism. Conscious of the Sunnī opposition, Shiʿī activists, including the many Bā ʿAlawī among them, presented their thoughts and practices as the way of the *ahl al-bayt*.[74] It was the usage of this term that became a crucial site of negotiations within the Bā ʿAlawī community. On the one hand, Bā ʿAlawī scholars had been presenting themselves as the successors of the *ahl al-bayt*; yet, the same term was now being used to denote Imāmī Shiʿism, resulting in the surfacing of doubt among young Bā ʿAlawī that the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* was not the authentic way of the *ahl al-bayt*.

It is the discursive contestation between the Bā ʿAlawī and the Salafi on the one hand, and the Shiʿī on the other, that forms the enunciative context in which Jindān's speech entitled *Qul hādhihi sabīlī* (Say: 'This is My Way') should be understood. The lecture was delivered in 2006 during the plenary session of the congress of the Rabithah al-ʿAlawiyyah, the premier Bā ʿAlawī organisation, and the speech was subsequently turned into a treatise to be distributed among the Bā ʿAlawī. From the beginning, Jindān links the Rabithah with the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*: 'We are gathered in the Rabithah. Rabithah is an affinity and association that interlaced us, the Bā ʿAlawī, to be more connected with the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*.'[75]

In this term, Jindān highlights the connection of the Bā ʿAlawī to the *ahl al-bayt*. Quoting the aforementioned *ḥadīth* on the two Prophetic inheritances—the Qurʾan and the *ahl al-bayt*—Jindān comments that forging bonds with the Qurʾan and the *ahl al-bayt* is the only way to protect oneself from various kinds of deviations and innovations (*biḍʿa*). Jindān reinforces his argument by quoting ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād:

> They are the people who were bestowed with guidance
> And from God's grace, they were happy
> And except from God, they seek no objective
> And with the Qurʾan, they are always together.[76]

Furthermore, he related a story about a man who asked ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib about what it was that God had given to the *ahl al-bayt* that was not given to others. In reply, ʿAlī had said that God had given the *ahl al-bayt* a degree of understanding of the Qurʾan, which was bestowed on particular members of the Prophet's family.[77] In stressing the equality between the Qurʾan and the *ahl al-bayt*, Jindān, like his grandfather before him, argues that the *ahl al-bayt* should be the most authoritative commentator of the Qurʾan because of its

scrupulousness and orthopraxy, as well as its steadfastness in adhering to the path of the *ahl al-bayt*. He asserts that if the Bā ʿAlawī do not know the way of the *ahl al-bayt*, 'which is the path of their fathers and grandfathers, then there is no one on this earth who knows the way of the *ahl al-bayt*'.[78]

When uttering these words, Jindān was addressing the members of the Rabithah who came from both Shiʿī and Sunnī backgrounds. Here, Jindān reinforced the fact that the Bā ʿAlawī ancestors were the *ahl al-bayt*, and that they closely adhered to its path, thereby negating the new conflation of ʿAlid piety and Shiʿism. In a way, Jindān was trying to recapture the title of *ahl al-bayt* from its deployment by Shiʿī activists to signify, instead, the way of the Bā ʿAlawī.

The Bā ʿAlawī ancestors in Ḥaḍramawt, according to Jindān, are the champions of the way of the *ahl al-bayt* in their respective eras. They guide people to know, understand and follow the path of the *ahl al-bayt*, because 'they are the inhabitants of that holy house and they were born in that house. They know very well the rules and teachings that originate from their own house.'[79] Again, quoting from ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d.1719), Jindān describes the Bā ʿAlawī ancestors as follows:

> And they [the *ahl al-bayt*] are plenty and decent as their grandfather prayed
> During the wedding [of ʿAlī and Fāṭima], were you not listening?
> Their house is the house of prophecy, chivalry, guidance
> And knowledge from the past and the future
> The house of leadership (*al-siyāda*), happiness, worship,
> And goodness, all encompassed within it,
> The house of the imāmate, authority and honour,
> And message reserved for the scrupulous.
> They are the people, who, when asked for help in times of calamities
> And hardship, they would come like the heavy rain of assistance.[80]

Closing the argument, Jindān concluded the section by noting that al-Ḥaddād was 'a luminary of the *ahl al-bayt* who had strengthened the foundations of the *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt*', and thus established a link between *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* and *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt*. In fact, as Jindān argues, the *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt* is what has always been practised by the Bā ʿAlawī, and it is this *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt* that is known as the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*.[81] Central to the teachings of the *Ṭarīqa* is the emulation of the Prophet by following the footsteps of his family. Again, al-Ḥaddād supplies Jindān with the proper articulation:

> Hold fast to the book of God
> And follow the *Sunna*
> Emulate the pious predecessors
> May God grant you guidance.[82]

Jindān explains that these verses are the central teachings of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*:

> The Qur'an is the book of guidance from God, so that people can reach salvation. The *Sunna* of the Prophet is the explanation of the Qur'an. The pious predecessors are the concrete manifestations and the living translations of the Qur'an and *Sunna* that are closer to us, and thus can be emulated. They are the reason why the Qur'an and the *Sunna* have reached our hands today with a correct understanding.[83]

Thus, according to Jindān, it is this ability to transmit religious thought from within the family that distinguishes the Bā ʿAlawī from other Islamic scholarly lineages, as they have learnt by observing the daily practices of their parents and grandparents:

> We already have everything in this *Ṭarīqa*, but why are we looking for others and forget[ting] what we have in front of us? A path whose truth has been tested for 14 centuries? [...] The Prophet said, 'The analogy of my *ahl al-bayt* is like Noah's ark. Those who are inside will be safe, and those who are not would perish'. We are the owner of that great ark. Is it fitting that as an insider we go on looking for another ark—especially if the ark we are looking to has holes?[84]

It is evident that the targets of this speech are the Bā ʿAlawī who have embraced Shiʿism. For Jindān, they have missed the fact that the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* is the *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt*, and thus have gone astray looking for another *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt*. Therefore, the objective of Jindān's speech is to interrogate the order of signification ushered by the Shiʿī activists, by means of re-capturing the signifier *ahl al-bayt* to describe the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*.

It is worth noting that Jindān identifies the reason for all of these confusions in the fact that the Bā ʿAlawī in Indonesia have been cut off from their tradition, hence, rather than following the *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt* by emulating their predecessors, they prefer to read philosophical and theological texts from other traditions. For Jindān, like his Yemeni teacher Habīb ʿUmar, orthopraxy is the most crucial aspect of Islam as it is only through this that one would receive divine favours and guidance. This, in turn, means that the safest way to uphold orthopraxy is by emulating the predecessors. By upholding orthopraxy, Jindān utilises the language of the Salafi discourse to stress the authority of the Bā ʿAlawī in matters of practice and emulation of the Prophet. Further, by reaffirming the Bāʿalawi tradition of orthopraxy as the *Ṭarīqa ahl al-bayt*, he is countering Shiʿī claims, which began to spread in Indonesia in the post-1979 era, that Imāmī Shiʿism is the only way of the *ahl al-bayt*. In doing so, Jindān is able to construe a middle position between the discourses of the campus-based Islamic reformist movements and the Shiʿī missionary

activism, where a new configuration of Bā ʿAlawī authority can be appreciated by both factions.[85]

Reconfigurations and redevelopments of ʿAlid piety

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that ʿAlid piety is a modality of thought and practice that secures the centrality and prominence of the *ahl al-bayt* in Islam. It is a religious imagination that locates the means of accessing the Prophetic path through the mediation of his family and descendants. Such a modality includes the belief that the Prophet's family is bestowed with epistemic distinction and spiritual gravity not given to others. While the proponents of ʿAlid piety corroborate such a modality with scriptural bases and doctrines, its specific manifestations differ in time and place.

As numerous contestations over Bā ʿAlawī authority have erupted, different Bā ʿAlawī scholars have attempted to counter these challenges by reconfiguring their authority through different visions of ʿAlid piety. In the early twentieth century, Ibn Muḥsin contravened the modern reformists' construction of authority based on the new knowledge structure, by envisioning a form of authority that combined ʿAlid genealogy with a Sufi conception of sanctity. The mid-twentieth century, as an era characterised by various moves to return to the scriptural foundations of Islam, provided Ibn Jindān with a discursive space to rearticulate Bā ʿAlawī authority in the *ḥadīthī* framework. Ibn Jindān thus provided ʿAlid piety with a strong scriptural basis. The contemporary contestations between Salafism and Shiʿism in both Yemen and Indonesia drove Jindān, like his teacher in Ḥaḍramawt, to present ʿAlid piety as following the *sunna* through emulation of the Prophet's descendants. Defining orthopraxy as the way of the *ahl al-bayt*, Ibn Jindān attempts to reclaim the concept from its conflation with Shiʿism.

By means of discursive analysis, I have attempted to chart the diachronic development of ʿAlid piety among the Bā ʿAlawī in modern Indonesia. This approach is useful in illustrating the dialogical nature of discourses on the *ahl al-bayt*, as well as showing the inter-linkages between ʿAlid piety and visions of religious authority. Thus, we have seen how, as a group that claimed direct descent from the Prophet, the Bā ʿAlawī utilised ʿAlid piety as a means to envision and express claims to their religious authority.

10

LOCATING THE DESCENDANTS OF ʿALĪ IN SOUTH-WEST ACEH

THE PLACES OF ʿALID PIETY IN LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY SEUNAGAN

Daniel Andrew Birchok[1]

The question of the role of Shiʿī-inspired practice in the Malay world is one that intersects with a range of other questions related to the history of Islam in Southeast Asia from its earliest periods to the present. One of the central problems, addressed explicitly in this volume, is how one should conceptualise Shiʿism, its movement through place and time and its performance in particular historical circumstances in the context of the Malay Peninsula and archipelago. In responding to this problem, this chapter takes its cue from the volume title, deploying the category of ʿAlid piety, following Marshall G. S. Hodgson's articulation of '"Alid loyalism', for the purposes of describing and analysing the places and communities inhabited by a group of *sayyids*, the Habib Seunagan, resident in the province of Aceh in the Republic of Indonesia.

The article begins with a discussion of two analytic paradigms that can be applied to the task of explicating the historical role of Shiʿism in the Malay world: L. F. Brakel's 'de-Shiʿitisation' thesis and Hodgson's articulation of ʿAlid loyalism. Paying special attention to the problem of how each paradigm

understands the history of Islam's movement through places and times that encompass the Indonesian archipelago, I suggest that as an analytic frame, ʿAlid piety overcomes several problems inherent in models of de-Shiʿitisation, especially to the extent that it provides a way to understand the sorts of discourses and practices in question as participating in a history of Islamisation that is multi-directional, part of a tradition of contested orthodoxy, and contingent upon specific historical circumstances.[2] In the final two sections of the chapter, I turn to a description of the Habib Seunagan's ʿAlid piety and its relationship to this family's late-twentieth-century location within three communities, each one central to their religious and social authority. The history of this family during this period reveals a re-emphasis of their ʿAlid piety that was, in part, the result of their response to the historical circumstances of the period, including criticism of their practice from those with competing visions of Sunnī orthodoxy.

De-Shiʿitisation and ʿAlid piety: Islamisation and orthodoxy in the Malay world

Before introducing ʿAlid piety as a category of historical and ethnographic analysis in Southeast Asia, one must first come to terms with a dominant way in which the topic of Shiʿism has been discussed by scholars writing about the region. This is the idea, most explicitly articulated by L. F. Brakel in his work on the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*, which postulates that a significant portion of early Islamic influences in the Malay world were Shiʿī.[3] According to Brakel, over the intervening centuries following this initial influence, a process of 'de-Shiʿitisation' occurred, both in texts such as the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* and in the Southeast Asian Islamic milieu more generally. This followed 'the general tendency of Indonesian Islam to shed its heterodox past and join the mainstream of orthodox (Sunnī) Islam'.[4] In his analysis of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*, Brakel bases this claim on two points, that is, that the Malay texts are based on a Persian source, and that a detailed comparison of several Malay versions written over a period of centuries reveals that identifiably Shiʿī content has been edited using one of several methods. The result of the editing process has been to remove or dampen 'Shiʿa character'.[5]

There is much in Brakel's analysis to which any serious consideration must pay heed. In particular, his analysis of the versions of the texts involved do seem to show a process of self-conscious editing that removes certain elements

that one might reasonably identify as Shiʿī. Nor is the Persian origin of the text something that can be easily dismissed. However, there are also several questions raised by Brakel's treatment of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*, especially his historicising of this treatment in terms of a wider process of de-Shiʿitisation. For one, it tends to reify the categories of Sunnī and Shiʿī in ways that assume both ahistorical and univocal referents for each. Marshall G. S. Hodgson has argued that far from being clear categories, from the moment of initial controversy over the Prophet Muḥammad's succession, a collection of varied and negotiable ideas which identified those who in some way held an allegiance to ʿAlī were articulated, yet constantly in flux.[6] Even after the eighth century, following the establishment of various groups that reasonably might be identified as Shiʿī, that is, the Twelvers, Ismailiyya and Zaydiyya, "'Alid loyalism' continued to be well-regarded within the Sunnī fold. This was especially so among those who held that the descendants of ʿAlī were privy to esoteric knowledge by virtue of their biological descent, and those who carried on the speculative concerns of early Shiʿī groups. Thus, Hodgson suggests that rather than being only, or primarily, a concept splitting Islam into two major parts over the question of political loyalty to ʿAlī, ʿAlid loyalism consists of a collection of varied and related features, which can be expressed among Sunnīs as well as Shiʿīs.

Brakel's analysis also assumes a unidirectional flow of waves of Islamic influence, first from the Indian subcontinent, and eventually followed by others from the Arab Middle East.[7] He is explicit in his understanding of these waves as progressively bringing Southeast Asian Islamic practices into the fold of an orthodox Sunnī Islam. Such a model has underpinned much scholarship on this question since the colonial period, and has continued to be a dominant paradigm in scholarship in and about post-colonial Indonesia.[8] However, scholarship in this vein has too often failed to recognise the ways in which it is complicit in affirming a particular notion of orthodoxy within an Islamic tradition, where disagreement over such orthodoxy is simultaneously a vexing problem and inextricably constitutive of the tradition itself.[9] Such approaches tend to see 'Shiʿa character', along with various sundry other sensibilities and practices, as both remnants of a bygone era and sub-orthodox Sunnī practice, or simply beyond the pale of Islam altogether. In the process, they have not infrequently misidentified the give-and-take of debates over orthodoxy as a process of purification of Islam of its heretical, Shiʿī, syncretic or other objectionable elements.[10]

Hodgson's approach offers analytic tools to deal with several of the problems found in the de-Shiʿitisation thesis. Inherent in Hodgson's articulation

of the concept of ʿAlid loyalism is the foundational assumption that expressions of ʿAlid loyalism are flexible, negotiated, and contingent upon historical circumstances. As such, it is highly likely that they will not simply be transported in a unidirectional flow, but move back-and-forth between multiple actors and interlocutors. Further, Hodgson's insistence on the continuing importance of modes of ʿAlid piety in otherwise clearly Sunnī contexts following the relative consolidation of a distinctly Shiʿī tradition in the eighth century suggests that the expression of ʿAlid forms of piety in the Malay world are not necessarily anomalous, sub-orthodox remnants of a Shiʿī past. They rely instead upon (ritual, semiotic, discursive, political, etc.) resources long held in Sunnī Islam, which are called upon in contingent historical circumstances.

Before moving to my own analysis, I wish to stress that while my deployment of a category of ʿAlid piety informed by Hodgson does raise serious questions regarding Brakel's de-Shiʿitisation thesis, it is neither the intention, nor do I believe it to be the unintentional effect, of this analysis to wholly discredit Brakel's treatment of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*. While I have not studied the text myself, Brakel's analysis of the various versions seems sound. To the extent that the text has undergone revisions over a period of two to three centuries, resulting in the de-emphasis of elements that can be identified as Shiʿī, an attempt, over that period, by several copyists to censor these elements would seem to be indicated. Further, it is not necessarily inaccurate to identify some textual sources, such as the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*, as originating in a Shiʿī sectarian milieu. However, using such examples to establish an interpretive frame of de-Shiʿitisation as a mechanism of a progressively more orthodox Islamisation is problematic, given the patchy nature of surviving evidence. One must acknowledge that instead of being inevitably rooted out as heterodox at some later time, it is not unlikely that such phenomena will become a part of the resources of possible expressions of ʿAlid piety considered proper, even explicitly Sunnī practice. This is especially the case to the extent that practices of ʿAlid piety are already a part of negotiated orthodoxy in the place and time in which new ʿAlid-oriented practices are introduced.[11]

In what follows, I will engage in an analysis of the Habib Seunagan—a group of *sayyids* resident on the south-west coast of Aceh, Indonesia. I begin with a description of the Habib Seunagan's own configuration of ʿAlid piety. Similar in significant ways to that of other *sayyids*, this piety is also unique in ways that reflect the particular circumstances in which the Habib Seunagan inhabit their social positions.[12] I then move to a discussion of how these modes of ʿAlid piety intersect with the themes of Islam, place and motion. If

the sort of analysis presented by Brakel is flawed in the particular ways in which it understands how Islam has moved through place and time, it certainly cannot be faulted for recognising the importance of these themes. The ʿAlid piety employed by the Habib Seunagan in the late-twentieth-century works to emplace them in several localities and communities, each on vastly different scales. My discussion of these themes is dedicated to exploring three such localities.

A threefold ʿAlid piety: genealogy, silsila *and mystical substance*

In the foothills of the Bukit Barisan mountain range, lying just below the peak of Singgahmata and over 40 km from the coastal city of Meulaboh is the region of Seunagan, in the Nagan Raya district of Aceh, Indonesia. The countryside there is dotted by grave complexes, some hidden in difficult to reach wooded areas, others humbly but carefully cultivated in small villages, and still others lying at the centre of grand courtyards that include mosques and shelters known as *dayah* (Acehnese) set aside for the performance of *ratéb* (Acehnese; Arabic: *rātib*)—the rhythmic recitation of the names of God (Indonesian: *zikir*; Acehnese: *ziké* or *diké*; Arabic: *zikr*), praises to the Prophet Muḥammad (Indonesian: *selawat*; Acehnese: *seulaweuët*; Arabic: *ṣalawāt*), or other formulae used in devotional practice. Many of these graves are believed to belong to a group of persons to which I will refer using the term Habib Seunagan—a family who claim a prominent place in social and religious relations in the region today.[13]

The Habib Seunagan offer an interesting example, which, in many ways, reflects patterns of ʿAlid piety practised in different places and times in Southeast Asia by *sayyids*. Perhaps the most illuminating recent account of such a pattern is to be found in Engseng Ho's historical ethnography of ʿAlawi *sayyids* and the *ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Over a period of several centuries, as *sayyids* enmeshed in this complex of ritual and kinship networks travelled to and from the various littorals of the Indian Ocean, they wove interconnected webs of genealogies recorded in literature, grave complexes and ritual practices. These genealogies combined biological and mystical descent through articulations of such descent in terms of the *nūr Muḥammad*—the Muhammadan light through which all the world was created, and that those ʿAlawi about whom Ho writes understood as being passed to the Prophet's descendants with each successive generation.[14] The Habib Seunagan, who are the topic of this chapter, do not participate in the ʿAlawi complex. In fact, as I will describe

below, there is much about their practice that might be considered antithetical to the specific modes of ʿAlawi claims-making described by Ho. However, they share many of the same basic features of ʿAlid piety with the ʿAlawi. Although configured and articulated in different manners, in the formulation of their practice and authority the Habib Seunagan, like the ʿAlawi, link three elements of their social position and history, namely, their descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, their role in a mystical complex, that is, the Shaṭṭāriyya order, and the descent of a mystical substance marking their significance.[15]

One of the chief ways in which the Habib Seunagan resemble the ʿAlawi lies in the inscription of their genealogy on the landscape alluded to in the opening paragraph of this section. The most common way people articulated the Habib Seunagan's genealogy in my presence was by making reference to the various graves in the region. Each grave was a sort of mnemonic device connected not only to the genealogical web that linked up the entirety of the countryside, but to narrative fragments and ritual practices that could be pieced together along with the genealogical links in the chain. Those who were narrating these fragments would usually begin with the grave in their immediate vicinity, relating stories of the person buried within it, and the sorts of ritual practices carried out there. Then, if someone held the requisite knowledge and was so inclined, he or she would begin to point in different directions on the horizon, indicating the direction of the grave of the son, student or colleague of the person in question, buried in a different town, sometimes several kilometres away.

The metonymic character of these graves as inscriptions of genealogical history and narrative fragments across the Seunagan countryside resembles that of the graves stretching across the Indian Ocean in Ho's account. However, the comparatively imprecise and broken genealogies which these graves inscribe are quite different from the well-kept family records described by Ho. Not only do links change and frequently break as one moves back in time; the Habib Seunagan carry no family name, making it impossible to place them, even in a very vague way, within the often meticulously recorded genealogies, such as those issued by al-Rabiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya—an official body which, since the 1920s, has engaged in the project of verifying and recording the genealogies of the ʿAlawi in Indonesia.[16] For their part, the Habib Seunagan seem aware of, but not overly concerned with, problems that this lack of a definitive link to a larger family tree might entail. My inquiries regarding their family name were usually met with the response that 'Habib'—an honorific commonly used in deference to *sayyids*—is their family name ('*Habib marga*

kami').[17] Still, no independently verifiable genealogy exists. This fact is not usually elided or obscured by the family or their followers, who openly admit that the once existent genealogy has been lost.

While the genealogies I collected, both at gravesites as well as through direct inquiry to specific interlocutors, varied widely, most of them include several key figures. In Seunagan, the line begins with an individual who is buried in a relatively small complex in the village of Kuta Aceh, just a few kilometres from the district's commercial and former political centre, Jeuram. Commonly referred to as Intu, in most versions, he is also associated with the *wali songo* (nine saints) of Java, and thought of as either one of the *wali songo* himself or a close descendant.[18] Following Intu, several generations pass with little agreement until one reaches the figure known as Habib Abdurrahim. Located in Pulo Ie, just a few kilometres from Intu's grave, Habib Abdurrahim's grave is one of two sites at which regular large gatherings occur at several points in the year. He is the progenitor of all of the most important lines of the Habib Seunagan today, and is commonly credited with Islamising all of Seunagan.[19] In this mission, Habib Abdurrahim, frequently referred to with the mystical title of '*qutubul ujud*' (Arabic: *quṭb al-wujūd*) enlisted the help of four deputies, referred to as *autad* (Arabic: *awtād*).[20] The family of one of these *autad*, Teungku Tjik di Kila, came to be tied to the Habib Seunagan through occasional marriages. The genealogy held by one of the descendants of Teungku Tjik di Kila traces his own family to a king of Syria. This king was married to a woman from Baghdad—the sister of a man, 'Banta Sultan', who was the ancestor of the Habib Seunagan through the most-esteemed Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī (d.1166). This link reinforces family ties between the line of the Habib Seunagan and that of Teungku Tjik di Kila, by placing these ties in a much earlier time period, while also laying claim to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī as an ancestor of the Habib Seunagan.[21] Thus, what emerges from the narrative fragments that circulate in and around Seunagan, and that are inscribed through graves on the land and relations between prominent families, is a genealogy punctuated by five key links: the Prophet Muḥammad and his family, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī, one or more *wali songo*, Intu and Habib Abdurrahim.[22]

The assertion of genealogical links to the Prophet Muḥammad through these key figures is neither the only way in which the Habib Seunagan participate in an ʿAlid piety, nor the sole source of their religious and social authority. The terms widely used to identify Habib Abdurrahim and Teungku Tjik di Kila, *qutub* and *autad*, are drawn from mystical discourses most closely

associated with the influential twelfth- and thirteenth-century Andalusian mystic, Ibn ʿArabī (d.1240), especially variants of Ibn ʿArabī's thought articulated by the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century figure, ʿAbd al-Qarīm al-Jīlī (d.1424).[23] Used to denote the axial human 'pole' around which the universe revolves (*quṭb*), and this pole's cosmologically closest associates (*awtād*), this terminology points to the Habib Seunagan's role in the local branch of the Shaṭṭāriyya Sufi order, of which they are the central figures. The Shaṭṭāriyya is, like many Sufi orders, at least potentially ʿAlid in that key ʿAlid figures occur in its *silsila* (records of transmission; Indonesian: *silsilah*).[24] Just how the Habib Seunagan link themselves to a Shaṭṭāriyya *silsila* is unclear. I never was shown a complete *silsila*, nor was one ever recited for me or, to my knowledge, in my presence. In a recent work about the Shaṭṭāriyya, published with the support of key members of the family, a *silsila* is published. However, this is the *silsila* of the seventeenth-century scholar, Shaykh Yūsuf Makassar (d.1699), and the author makes no links between it and any of the Habib Seunagan.[25] That the *silsila* of Shaykh Yūsuf is employed in this manner, even for illustrative purposes, is curious, given the importance in Aceh, and more widely in the archipelago, of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raʾūf (d.1693)—the seventeenth-century Acehnese holder of a Shaṭṭāriyya *silsila*.[26] Indeed, a member of the family claimed that their *silsila* did run through Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raʾūf. Another, however, claimed a different *silsila* that ran directly through the genealogical family line of the Habib Seunagan, without meeting either Shaykh Yūsuf or Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raʾūf.

My inability to locate a more detailed *silsila* might have resulted from a desire to keep me from accessing this knowledge, possibly considered esoteric to the degree that my pursuit of it was deemed inappropriate. There were clearly times, in my interactions with members of the family and their close associates, when my questions regarding mystical doctrine seemed to be deferred indefinitely. Efforts to meet *khalifah*—those with the authority to initiate and teach members of the order—proved elusive, although it was at times difficult to know if this was because I was being diverted from or avoided by such persons, or because of what seemed to be a diffuse organisational structure within the complex itself. Nonetheless, I was able to gain knowledge of specific aspects of Shaṭṭāriyya practice in Seunagan. Some members, including those from among the Habib Seunagan, made a point of cautiously identifying the group as having affinities with the sixteenth-century Acehnese figure, Ḥamza Fanṣūrī (d.1527), associated with *waḥdat al-wujūd*—a strand of mystical thought in Indonesia commonly referred to as *wujūdiyya*.[27]

One interlocutor identified *al-Durr al-Nafīs*—an eighteenth-century text written by Muḥammad Nafīs b. Idrīs al-Banjārī (d.1812), and once popular in the archipelago among *wujūdiyya* devotees—as a text studied by more serious members of the Shaṭṭāriyya.[28] Others marked certain forms of demonstrative *zikir* in which the Arabic pronoun, *Hu*, is used to attempt to achieve *fana* (Arabic: *fanāʾ*), the absorption of one's self into the experience of God's oneness and unity, as distinctive of their practice when compared to other *ṭarīqa*.[29]

For the vast majority of the Habib Seunagan's followers, participation in the Shaṭṭāriyya order means attending events at which groups of persons gather to conduct *ratéb*—the recitation of *zikir*, *selawat* and various other formulae. These events occur at the site of one of the graves dotting the Seunagan countryside. Smaller semi-weekly gatherings are gendered female, while large gatherings are held several times yearly and mixed. Two sites in particular, that is, of the grave of the Habib Muda who died in 1972 and who is buried in the town of Peuleukung, approximately eight kilometres from Intu's grave, and that of the grave of Habib Abdurrahim, are the central geographic points in these ritual cycles. These gatherings occur on the birth and death days of the individuals in question, on each of the two major Islamic feast days, and at other times during the year. The largest is on Īd al-Aḍḥā, and entails thousands of participants who attend in groups from villages all around Aceh, some at the grave of the Habib Muda, and others at that of Habib Abdurrahim. In my conversations with members of the Habib Seunagan and their descendants, it was these large events that frequently proved the focal point of their descriptions of the Shaṭṭāriyya, and they were most enthusiastic when offering these descriptions. When I asked about the Shaṭṭāriyya, I usually was invited to such events.

Much of this practice participates in wider patterns of relationships of devotion between *ṭarīqa* members of various levels and their teachers, who serve in combinations of guide, intercessor and other roles.[31] Such practice is often already infused with ʿAlid sensibilities, especially when *silsila* or genealogical links of Shaykhs find their way through groups of ʿAlī's descendants. In the case of the ʿAlawiyya order described by Ho, links of genealogical and mystical descent are most effective when they are relatively congruent, reinforcing each other. The same could be said of the Habib Seunagan. While my questions regarding a definitive *silsila* remained, at best, incompletely answered, everyone with whom I spoke agreed that primary leadership of the Shaṭṭāriyya order has been passed along a line of biological descent, from father to son or brother to brother, since the time of Habib Abdurrahim. While the Shaṭṭāriyya, unlike

the ʿAlawiyya, has not been primarily a vehicle for channelling the mystical power of *sayyids*, it is clear that mystical and genealogical lines have become entwined in Shaṭṭāriyya practice in Seunagan.[31]

However, the exact mechanism of this combined genealogical and mystical descent was something that was, at least in some conversations, ambivalent. I first became aware of this ambivalence through conversations with men and women in their sixties and older. A few of these interlocutors related narratives that involved a historical moment, in which the Habib Muda, whose grave in Peuleukung is one of the two centres of Shaṭṭāriyya ritual activity in Seunagan today, suddenly rose in prominence. These stories differed, and they were rarely full narratives. However, what was clear was that something in the Habib Muda's status had changed. He came to be called by the appellation for which he is now known, translatable as the 'young Habib', and was no longer using his previous name. The event in question involved the descent (*turun*; Acehnese: *tron*) of light, indicated with the Indonesian term *terang*, or in at least one instance with the Arabic-derived term *nur*, specifically as in the 'Light of Muhammad' (Arabic: *nūr Muḥammad*). This linkage, in at least some accounts of the rise to prominence of the Habib Muda, between the *nūr Muḥammad* and the Habib Muda's biological and mystical descent from the Prophet Muḥammad and ʿAlī resonates with Islamic mystical discourses that Hodgson would recognise as ʿAlid. Whether strictly Shiʿī or embedded more broadly in what today might be recognised as Sunnī mystical practice, these discourses have wrestled with the significance of the Muḥammadan light as a marker and carrier of esoteric knowledge and authority. In varying and competing interpretations, the *nūr Muḥammad* is almost always intimately tied to the creation of the world, the person of the Prophet Muḥammad and his biological relations, and rightful leadership and authority within the Muslim community as a whole or of particular order (*ṭarīqa*) or other groupings.[32]

Members of the Habib Seunagan themselves spoke about similar ideas in the course of conversations regarding how certain members of their family acquired their special abilities. One described how his feet would suddenly be as heavy as lead, among other signs, if *keramat* (mystical powers usually associated with esoteric knowledge) were to descend (*tron*) upon him at that very moment. We were in the vicinity of one of his ancestors buried in a nearby graveyard who had experienced the *keramat* descend upon him in his own lifetime, and the proximity of them to each other would result in almost a short-circuiting of mystical powers. My interlocutor pointed out several persons of previous generations to whom *keramat* had descended, including the

Habib Muda, relating the sorts of stories of miraculous abilities of the type involving super-perceptive sensories or the ability to calm the moods of people and animals, to which I had grown accustomed to hearing with regard to such figures. The *keramat* could be inherited by any descendant of the Habib Abdurrahim through a male line, thus a *sayyid*, and my interlocutor exhibited a distinct sense of anticipation during this particular discussion. *Keramat*, usually denoting miraculous powers associated with esoteric knowledge and holy persons and sites, seemed here to have the added meaning of a divine appointment of someone from among the Habib Seunagan.

However, just how the descent of the *keramat*, *terang* or *nūr* related to the descent of biological and mystical genealogies was never clear. On one hand, my interlocutor above linked the descent of the *keramat* with membership in the family through a male line, but he did not comment at all on the descent of leadership in the Shaṭṭāriyya order. At one point, I asked a descendant of the Habib Muda (not himself a *sayyid* as he was linked to his ancestor through a female line of descent, and therefore presumably not able to receive the *keramat*) about the problem of succession. Would it be possible for *keramat* to descend as a mechanism to determine who would lead the Habib Seunagan and the Shaṭṭāriyya order upon the death of Abu Qudrat, the current head of the Shaṭṭāriyya order and son of the Habib Muda? This interlocutor proceeded to draw a genealogy that jumped from Shaykh Muhammad Yasin (the Habib Muda's father) through to the Habib Muda and his two sons who had succeeded him. In my interlocutor's version, the *keramat* indeed descended but only through this blood line, and this blood line alone, from father to son and brother to brother. He seemed intent on making sure that I did not confuse this point. His version made no mention of a moment at which the Habib Muda was struck by any sort of mystical substance or light.

For the ʿAlawi *sayyid*s discussed by Ho, the *nūr Muḥammad* is believed to travel through the blood lines of *sayyid*s. The articulation of the Habib Muda's appointment in terms of such a Muḥammadan light by one of my interlocutors is thus suggestive of another parallel between the ʿAlawi and the Habib Seunagan. This parallel is perhaps strongest in the articulation of the descent of *keramat* through the line of blood described by the descendant of the Habib Muda above. However, even in this instance, the notion is more restrictive than in the case of the ʿAlawi. All ʿAlawi carry the *nūr Muḥammad*, but only certain persons from among the Habib Seunagan are marked by *terang*, *nūr* or *keramat*. Nonetheless, the descent of these substances is linked to the biological and mystical descent of the family, much as in the case of the ʿAlawi.

In the above description, I illustrate that, like the ʿAlawi described by Ho, the Habib Seunagan participate in a piety that underpins their practice and authority by means of an entwining of biological descent, position within a mystical complex, and the descent of mystical substance to and through certain persons. At the same time, there are significant differences between the two, and these lie in the methods and precision of the inscription of their biological and mystical genealogies, the institutional affiliations of their mystical practice, and the precise ways and consequences of the descent of substances such as the *nūr Muḥammad* or *keramat*. Both are distinctly and explicitly ʿAlid, following Marshall G. S. Hodgson's definition of ʿAlid loyalism as discussed above.

However, even if one accepts that ʿAlid piety can itself be a Sunnī form, might one still legitimately understand the ʿAlid piety of the Habib Seunagan in terms of the de-Shiʿitisation thesis? The Habib Seunagan are, in fact, identified as Shiʿa (*syiah*) by some in daily discourse in Seunagan. Just what is meant by Shiʿa in this context is not entirely clear, and I was never able to acquire even a rudimentary definition in my interactions with those who use the term. I suspect that the term is related to strands of public discourse in Aceh that, not unlike the de-Shiʿitisation thesis, link perceived unorthodoxy and Shiʿism in a manner that makes them interpretively equivalent. The Habib Seunagan have long been renowned for what many have found to be unusual practices, ranging from their forms of *zikir* to relaxed standards for fasting during the month of Ramadan.[33] Snouck Hurgronje had heard that in the late nineteenth century, the Habib Seunagan held unusual legal opinions, for example, that a man is permitted to marry nine wives, which Hurgronje identified as Zaydī.[34] I encountered the same opinion regarding marriage in conversations with villagers in the region, although I cannot recall a member of the Habib Seunagan themselves putting it forward. For their part, the Habib Seunagan vehemently deny what they see as accusations against their orthodoxy. They accuse their critics of being from among the ranks of reformers who 'think all Sufis are Shiʿī' (*berpikir semua Sufi syiah*). Some, though, are willing to accept the terms of the de-Shiʿitisation thesis, holding that while their own practice is well within the *ahl al-sunna waʾl-jamaʿa*—the most common way in Aceh of expressing one's allegiance to a presumably Sunnī orthodoxy—there was once a Shiʿī strand in Aceh that may have, at some point, informed their own practice. All of this would seem to suggest that a process of de-Shiʿitisation, indeed, may have occurred or be in the process of occurring. If one was to accept the terms of certain strands of Islamic reformism, adherents of which

have attacked the Habib Seunagan as unorthodox and impure in past decades, one could interpret the Habib Seunagan themselves as progressively accepting Sunnī orthodoxy, through the reform of their own practice as they have been confronted by that orthodoxy.[35] However, in the next section, I will argue that the precise configuration of ʿAlid piety discussed above has been reinforced in the late twentieth century, in part as a response to critics of the Habib Seunagan's orthodoxy. There may be certain elements of the Habib Seunagan's practice that have been de-emphasised in recent years, but this has not so much been a process of de-Shiʿitisation as part of an ongoing negotiation of orthodoxy. Further, other aspects of the Habib Seunagan's ʿAlid piety have been re-emphasised.

Placing the Habib Seunagan: the Habib Muda's late-twentieth-century configuration of ʿAlid piety

Having described the above threefold modality of the ʿAlid piety of the Habib Seunagan focused on configurations of genealogy, mystical practice and the descent of a mystical substance, I return in this final section to the problems of movement and place. Scholarship focused on those claiming descent from the Prophet Muḥammad has often taken the motion of *sayyid*s' bodies and their emplacements, through various sorts of practices within geographic and social place, as central to the mediation of tensions in their simultaneously local and extra-local positionalities.[36] In the case of the Habib Seunagan in the second half of the twentieth century, their practice has involved emplacements in multiple localities, all with their own specific links to the Habib Seunagan's ʿAlid piety and the historical contingencies of the time period. Specifically, they have re-articulated narratives of the coming of Islam to the Indonesian archipelago using the resources of their ʿAlid piety and, in the process, they have articulated their place in Seunagan, Aceh, the Indonesian nation and the wider Islamic cosmos, in a fashion that participates in dominant narratives of Islamisation in Aceh and the Indonesian archipelago, but undermines certain aspects of these narratives in significant ways.

In order to fully recognise the significance of the late-twentieth-century configurations of ʿAlid piety enacted by a key member of the Habib Seunagan, the Habib Muda, one must first understand the significance of historical narratives of the coming of Islam to the Indonesian archipelago in Aceh in the same period. As John R. Bowen has pointed out, a new group of narratives of chronologically and territorially progressive Islamisation, which Bowen terms

the 'Aceh history', was developed by a group of Acehnese and Indonesian intellectuals, beginning in the late 1950s.[37] While these narratives resemble, in significant ways, ones forwarded by Dutch colonial-era intellectuals, they vary on certain points celebrated by the founders of the post-colonial versions as representative of expressly anti-colonial politics. Bowen, deploying the vocabulary of Mikhail M. Bakhtin, articulated the shift in terms of 'new figures of time and space, a new "chronotope"' that served as 'an organizing centre for the ideas of narrative'.[38] The main characters in the histories were figures who moved from place to place, progressively forming Islamic realms and Islamising all of Aceh in the process. These figures were usually biologically related, tying familial descent to the narrative of the coming of Islam to Aceh and the archipelago. The narratives' anti-colonial politics rested on several points. Some were made in conjunction with related historical arguments about the coming of Islam to what would become Indonesia, including an early date for the coming of Islam to the archipelago, that is, the seventh century, an Arab instead of a South Asian source for Islam's initial spread into the archipelago, and the use of sources that they alleged had been ignored by colonial scholars.[39]

For a variety of reasons, these narratives were found to be compelling in Aceh, to the point of tending to redirect previous regional-specific histories into their narrative arc, when they did not overturn regional histories altogether. They not only articulated a history of Acehnese conversion to Islam, but tended to mark Aceh as the first place in the Indonesian archipelago to accept Islam, giving the province pride of place in an increasingly prestigious national narrative of Islamisation. Initially, they were propagated primarily by a group of government and religious elites who opposed practices of the Habib Seunagan, which they viewed as beyond the pale of Sunnī orthodoxy, and much practice associated with *ṭarīqa* more generally.[40] The histories themselves subtly reflected these critiques, for example, in the way they stressed the importance of Arab origins and influence, allegedly more pure and closer to the Prophet and his practice than those influences, including Shiʿism and mysticism, alleged to come from the Indian subcontinent.[41] Yet, as I describe below, these histories were soon taken up in manners that reinforced the legitimacy of much of the Habib Seunagan's practice and authority, actually re-emphasising their ʿAlid mystical and biological genealogies as a basis for their social positions in Seunagan, Aceh, the Indonesian nation, and the Islamic cosmos. It is within the context of these histories of Islamisation that one must understand certain features of the rise to prominence of the Habib Muda, the

same figure upon whom, according to the accounts discussed in the last section, descended some form of mystical substance.

According to the recently published official biography, the Habib Muda was born around the year of 1860.[42] He was involved in the resistance against the Dutch and, among other miracles, it was said that he had survived being shot in the head as a child.[43] Sometime before Indonesian independence, the Habib Muda married one of his daughters to the son of the *raja* (regional chief) of Beutong, the mountainous region to the east and north-east of Seunagan. This son-in-law, Teuku Azman, would rise to power as the Asisten Wedana (chief administrator) for Seunagan and its surrounding areas shortly after the Revolution. According to one of Teuku Azman's sons, his father took the post in 1953 when the previous Asisten Wedana took to the hills to join Darul Islam (DI), a network of guerrilla fighters in several parts of the Indonesian archipelago with the expressed goal of turning the Indonesian Republic into the Negara Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic State).

Both Teuku Azman and his father-in-law, the Habib Muda, were passionate in their opposition to DI. Together with Teungku Muda Waly (d.1961), the charismatic '*ulamā*' from nearby Labuhan Haji, and Teungku Hasan Krueng Kalee (d.1973), perhaps the most respected living '*ulamā*' in Aceh in this time period, the Habib Muda publicly stood in support of an Islamic legal opinion put forward by Tgk. Muda Waly in opposition to the rebellion. The period of DI, and the Habib Muda's opposition to it, seems to have been central in consolidating not only the Habib Muda's own prominence in later years and after his death, but also the presence of the Habib Seunagan in genealogies of central importance to prestigious narratives of Islamisation of the Indonesian archipelago associated with the narrative arc of the Aceh history discussed above. Dominant popular histories of Aceh that circulate within the province, and Indonesia more broadly, portray Aceh as a place in which staunchly Muslim guerrillas have faced off colonial and Indonesian Republican governments since the Dutch invasion of 1873. However, the Habib Muda, along with Teungku Syeikh Muda Waly and Teungku Hasan Krueng Kalee, formed a formidable Islamic opposition to the DI movement in the 1950s. Although I cannot say for certain when the association became a dominant strand in the narratives of the Habib Seunagan, the family's links to the *wali songo* became particularly pronounced and linked to the Habib Muda's opposition to DI in this time period, and they have remained so ever since.

One can consider a 1962 yearly report (*lapuran tahunan*), presumably submitted by the Asisten Wedana for Seunagan, who was then none other

than Teuku Azman, the year generally taken as the end of DI in Aceh.[44] One of the more interesting features of this report is the way in which it inscribes the Habib Seunagan into three different communities: an inter-regional cosmic realm by virtue of the family's descent from the Prophet Muḥammad's family and mystical genealogy, an extreme locality through claims of the family originating and maintaining the *adat* (customary practice) of Seunagan, and a pointedly national community through assertions of the Habib Seunagan and their followers' loyal patriotism. It identifies three groups in the district, two of which are potentially threatening to the national interest but which are small, and one that is immensely supportive of the Indonesian nation and dominant. The smaller yet threatening groups consist of those who align themselves with Teungku Zakaria Yunus (d.1996), the most respected former DI leader and active Islamic reformer in Seunagan, and those who have migrated from outside Seunagan and whose loyalty could therefore not be known. The patriotic group is that of the Habib Seunagan and their followers. The reason for the strength and nationalist loyalty of the Habib Seunagan and their followers is explained in the report in terms of the 'leadership and direction' (*pimpinan dan ashuan*) of 'Almarhum Habib Sjaichuna Qathubul Udjud Seunagan', here referring to the late Habib Abdurrahim. It is he from whom the *adat* of Seunagan arose in the first place and was 'left' (*ditinggalkan*) to the population, presumably during the years of Islamisation over which he presided. The category, *adat*, is left undefined, but it is identified as having its origins in Islam (*bersumber pada Islam*).

I have already discussed the biological and mystical genealogies claimed by the Habib Seunagan above. While their genealogies are not the precise records of the ʿAlawi, they are embedded in spatial practice and social relations in Seunagan, in a manner that makes them compelling for many, if not most, in the region, even for those who might privately challenge some of their claims. The link between Habib Abdurrahim and the Teungku Tjik di Kila is believed not only to have been made in the period of Islamisation in Seunagan overseen by both men, but in an earlier time period and place that lends credence and rhetorical symmetry to the Habib Seunagan's claims to descend from both the Prophet Muḥammad and the great Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī. The terms selected to describe Habib Abdurrahim and Teungku Tjik di Kila, *qutub* and *autad*, reflect mystical cosmologies that stress the role of these families in the maintenance of the very fabric and purpose of the universe. All of this, combined with the above discussed narratives regarding the divine appointment of figures such as the Habib Muda that circulate widely, lends support to the

performance of the Habib Seunagan as extra-local and cosmologically significant. It reinforces the claims of the Habib Seunagan to be *sayyid*s and shaykhs descended from the Prophet Muḥammad through Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī.

Ironically, however, the family's role in the Shaṭṭāriyya order also serves to firmly place them in an extreme locality. Two of the most common responses I would receive, when telling Acehnese friends outside of Seunagan that I was conducting research on Acehnese custom and history (*adat dan sejarah Aceh*) in this region, were, 'There are a lot of *sayyid*s in Seunagan' (*Le Sayyid di Nagan*), and '*Adat* in Seunagan is still right' (*Adat Nagan mantòng teupat*). This dual reputation unconsciously seems to echo the role attributed to Habib Abdurrahim in the 1962 report cited above, and many residents of Seunagan are quite aware of their region's reputation. This allows the Habib Seunagan, both by association and through their own often lavish displays of *adat* frequently tied to Shaṭṭāriyya ritual practice, to portray themselves as being the carriers and protectors of the *adat* of Seunagan, with their ancestor being the originator of this *adat*.

It is important to note, as many have argued convincingly, that the category of *adat* is itself fraught with the trappings of Dutch-colonial and post-independence Indonesian legal and ethnographic scholarship, reifying customary practice in manners that are frequently essentialist and relatively ahistorical, often to the benefit of ambivalent or repressive regimes.[45] Some of this scholarship has also suggested that, in large part because of this history, the category of *adat* has remained cogent for those in contemporary Indonesia, being at times a powerful discursive resource on which to draw for those of various and competing social positions. What I wish to draw attention to here is the way in which the Habib Seunagan have continued to claim a set of practices and their significance in terms of an *adat* that is thoroughly Islamic and traceable to their own line. To the extent that they have done so in a post-colonial context in which *adat*, and its relationship to proper Islamic practice, has been one of the central themes of national concern and moral authority, it is hardly surprising that the Habib Seunagan would articulate themselves in these terms.

One could consider a discussion I had with one young descendant of the Habib Muda. This interlocutor identified 'three foundations' (*lhèë bòh dasar*) for understanding his family's 'community' (*komuniti*). The first involved specific types of *zikir* and their goals, for those of the appropriate esoteric level, of inducing *fana*. The final two, however, were simply *khenduri*, an Acehnese and Malay term indicating any of a range of a number of feasts involving prayers and other ritual practices, and *silaturahmi*, a term that roughly indi-

cates cordial relations between individuals and parties. In his use of both the terms, *khenduri* and *silaturahmi*, my interlocutor was referencing any number of ritual feasts and visits that have been self-consciously placed at the centre of descriptions of ritual life in Seunagan. These include the large-scale *zikir* sessions described above, frequently the focal point of descriptions of the Habib Seunagan and their Shaṭṭāriyya order that I collected during field research. Both terms are intimately tied to, and recur almost daily in, metadiscourses on the practice of a properly Islamic *adat* in Seunagan. It would not be correct to claim the Habib Seunagan held a monopoly on these terms as references for their version of proper Islamic practice. One would be hard-pressed to find a Muslim in Aceh who did not describe proper Islamic practice in terms of *silaturahmi*. While some would criticise *khenduri* on various grounds, or at least certain aspects of what stereotypically traditional *khenduri* entail, nearly all of those who count themselves among the intellectual lineage of Teungku Syeikh Muda Waly, which is perhaps the most significant Islamic social network within the province today, would openly embrace the term and nearly all of its resonances with Acehnese tradition. Nonetheless, it is difficult to disentangle the Habib Seunagan from what is considered by most in the region, and even some outside it, as the exceptionally strong *adat* of Seunagan, and such a position is embedded in the genealogies of the family which highlight their role in the coming of an entwined Islam and *adat* to the region.

Both this extreme locality articulated in terms of Seunagan's *adat*, and the cosmic realm of *sayyid*s and shaykhs in which the Habib Seunagan are described in the above report, are tied explicitly to the Habib Seunagan's loyalty to the Indonesian nation. As described above, in the period just before the issuing of this report, the Habib Muda aligned with his son-in-law, Teuku Azman, was outspoken in his opposition to the DI guerrillas. One story recurs in my discussions of this period with living family members and suggests a moment in which the Habib Seunagan's links to the *wali songo* and Indonesian Republican politics seem to have become especially amplified. In this story, the Habib Muda was summoned to the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, sometime during DI. This summoning came directly from President Sukarno, and was made both to thank the Habib Muda for his loyalty and to seek his advice regarding DI. In the published biography, the Habib Muda is portrayed as being involved in very cordial and warm relations with Sukarno, exhibiting his allegiance, while at the same time 'honestly and openly' suggesting that a militarily less heavy-handed approach to the movement, accompanied by guidance in the ways of proper nationalism, would yield more effective results

in dealing with the guerrillas.[46] In addition to meeting Sukarno, the trip to Jakarta allowed the Habib Muda to visit and conduct *ziyarah* (devotional activities at the grave sites of ancestors or holy persons) at each of the graves of the *wali songo*, beginning with Sunan Giri and Sunan Gunung Jati, whom the text identifies as the Habib Muda's own ancestors. While these visits to the *wali songo*'s graves do not feature prominently in the oral versions of this narrative told by current family members, the gift of a *kris*, a Javanese-styled dagger, does. This *kris*, a gift from Sukarno, and which today is displayed in one of the pillars of the large mosque on the complex in which the Habib Muda is buried, is said to have belonged to one of the *wali songo*, possibly Sunan Kalijaga. It is widely believed to hold *keramat* and to guard the complex, with multiple stories regarding the fate that has befallen those who have entered this mosque with foul intentions circulating.

In the 1962 yearly report from which I quote above, the members of the genealogical line of the Habib Seunagan are identified as 'the descendants of the *wali* that founded the mosque in Demak on the island of Java', which is a reference to one of the most important episodes in narratives of the *wali songo*'s Islamisation of Java.[47] This stressing of links to Java reflected in this report, as well as in the widely circulating accounts of the Habib Muda's visit to Jakarta and the display of Sunan Kalijaga's *kris*, is remarkable on several counts. In most tales of the coming of Islam to the archipelago told in Aceh, and many of those told in other parts of Indonesia, it is Aceh from where Islam spreads through the archipelago. It is this point, in large part, which continues to make the histories discussed by Bowen compelling for Acehnese today. In many versions, the *wali songo* themselves are Acehnese, or have studied, taught or travelled in Aceh before making their way to Java. The Habib Seunagan with whom I spoke acknowledge this narrative, but claim that the initial coming of Islam to the archipelago landed only on Aceh's north coast before passing to Java and then returning to Aceh's west coast. They assert a place in the narrative arc of Islamisation, which constitutes a moment of Islamisation from Java to Aceh. This turns relational hierarchies associated with Aceh, the Indonesian nation and Islamisation out of their usual rhythms. DI supporters often portrayed Java as comparatively less-Islamised than Aceh. The Aceh history itself was part of efforts to end DI in Aceh, through stressing the primacy and grandeur of Aceh's Islamic past, which was something all Acehnese were alleged to share. In 1976, when the most recent guerrilla movement in Aceh began—this one being a nationalist front even more explicit in their portrayal of Java as fundamentally different from and opposed to Aceh—

these histories of Aceh's glorious Islamic past served as rallying points. Yet, the Habib Seunagan continued to express their loyalty to Jakarta, and they continued to do it in terms of their descent as *sayyid*s through the *wali songo*.

What do the places of the Habib Seunagan reveal about their strand of ʿAlid piety, specifically, and ʿAlid piety in late-twentieth-century Indonesia, more generally? Each of the three articulations of place and community I have noted here—the Islamic cosmos, Seunagan with its thoroughly Islamic *adat*, the Indonesian nation oddly tied to a history of Islamisation from Java to Aceh—are inextricably tied to the modalities of ʿAlid piety discussed in the previous section. As *sayyid*s and shaykhs descended from the Prophet Muḥammad and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī through the *wali songo*, and the founders of an Islamic *adat* tied to the ritual practice of the Shaṭṭāriyya, the Habib Seunagan were able to become emplaced in the above localities and communities in the manner described above. They were able to do so because of historical circumstances that allowed them to conjoin their practice of a threefold ʿAlid piety with the Habib Muda's support of the central government during DI and the rise to prominence of the narrative of Islamisation described by Bowen. While the narrative form of the Aceh history initially was propagated by adherents to a vision of Sunnī orthodoxy opposed to much of the Habib Seunagan's practice, the three basic modalities of the Habib Seunagan's ʿAlid piety ironically fit easily into the narrative form itself.[48] The Habib Seunagan were able to secure a place for themselves in one version of the narrative of Islamisation in a way that relied upon and re-emphasised their ʿAlid piety, even in the context of sometimes aggressive criticism from those factions who initially had done the most to set the terms of the narrative in the post-colonial period.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I argue that the Habib Seunagan practise a threefold ʿAlid piety. It is based on configurations of genealogical descent, mystical genealogy and the descent of a mystical substance, all of which underpin the religious and social authority of the family. As this configuration is tied to the importance of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, and esoteric knowledge that is believed to descend through ʿAlī, I analyse it as a form of ʿAlid piety, following Marshall G. S. Hodgson's description of ʿAlid loyalism. Using the particular configuration of this ʿAlid piety articulated in the late twentieth century by the Habib Seunagan, I argue that as an example in which such ʿAlid fea-

tures become re-emphasised, this instance presents a challenge to models of de-Shiʿitisation such as those articulated by L. F. Brakel. While certain features of the history of the Habib Seunagan might productively be thought of in terms of de-Shiʿitisation, for example, the de-emphasising of certain legal opinions that might be Zaydī, the practice of the Habib Seunagan clearly participates in wider patterns of piety common throughout the Sunnī Muslim community. Further, the history discussed here runs contrary to the teleology of the de-Shiʿitisation thesis, namely, that heterodox practice will be replaced by a Sunnī orthodoxy. Even if one takes the practice of the Habib Seunagan as Shiʿī, which is a dubious proposition, it would be difficult to argue that it is giving way to such an orthodoxy. The above articulations of ʿAlid piety have been involved in negotiations over orthodoxy that belies the notion that such orthodoxy is an *a priori* known factor. The career of the Habib Muda involved interactions and confrontations that helped to set the parameters of that orthodoxy, and that attempted to place the Habib Muda within it, often successfully. The confrontation with DI and the endorsement of the legal opinion put forward by Teungku Syeikh Muda Waly is one such instance. Another, the focus of the final section of this chapter, is the self-articulation of the Habib Seunagan as participating in three places and communities—a cosmic Islamic realm, an extreme locality based on the Islamic *adat* of Seunagan, and an Indonesian nation in which past Javanese have Islamised at least a part of Aceh. Rather than shed their ʿAlid practices and features in the face of aggressive assertions of one vision of Sunnī orthodoxy, the Habib Seunagan have deployed their ʿAlid piety to stake their own claims to another, doing so using the very terms and narrative forms mustered by their critics.

APPENDIX

MAJOR FIGURES IN THE GENEALOGY OF THE HABIB SEUNAGAN

I. The Prophet Muḥammad and his family (6th and 7th centuries, Arabian Peninsula)

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II. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī (11th and 12th centuries, Persia and Baghdad)

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III. *Wali songo* (15th and 16th centuries, Java)

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IV. Intu (time period unclear, Seunagan, buried in Kuta Aceh)

↓

V. Habib Abdurrahim (19th century, Seunagan, buried in Pulo Ie)

↓

VI. Habib Muda (19th and 20th centuries, Seunagan, buried in Peuleukung)

11

ʿALID PIETY AND STATE-SPONSORED SPECTACLE

TABOT TRADITION IN BENGKULU, SUMATRA

R. Michael Feener

This chapter examines the historical development of a tradition of ʿĀshūrāʾ commemoration known as *tabot* in Bengkulu, Indonesia. The *tabot* has its origins in Muslim India. It was carried to this stretch of the West Sumatra coast by South Asian Muslim migrants brought to Bengkulu under the British to man a small trading post located there. However, over the past three centuries it has absorbed and incorporated various local elements into its observance, and in the process, *tabot* has come to be regarded as a central marker of regional identity for the city and surrounding province of Bengkulu. The fate of *tabot* over the course of these developments illustrates a rather pervasive trend that lasted until the twentieth century in many parts of Muslim Southeast Asia—that of incorporating elements of ʿAlid piety in the formation of Muslim vernacular traditions. In the modern period, it has also taken on new valences with the intervention of the state in sponsoring select aspects of these Muḥarram observances.

History

The history of the *tabot* in Bengkulu is inextricably intertwined with that of the English East India Company in Sumatra. After having been expelled from

Banten in 1682, British traders in the Indonesian archipelago scrambled to re-establish their position in the highly profitable pepper trade, negotiating and experimenting with various sites along the west coast of Sumatra.[1] Eventually, the Company built Fort Marlborough at Bengkulu (Bencoolen) in 1714. This station, however, proved to pose continuing problems for the British, as evidenced by the derogatory descriptions found in numerous epistles—both official and personal—written by British officials serving in the region over the century that followed. By the time that Raffles arrived there in 1818, he found that 'the district was saturated with malaria; the officials underpaid, corrupt, and without hope; the Malays, suffering under the iniquitous system of forced culture, disaffected and hostile'.[2] The security situation was something commented on in much of the early documentation of British Bencoolen, and in response to this, the Company had brought over Sepoy soldiers—many of them South Asian Muslims—to man Fort Marlborough.[3]

It was not only soldiers, but other Indians as well, who were brought to Bencoolen under the British administration, as we have found reports indicating that in the early 18th century, resident Joseph Collett (d. 1725) 'encouraged country traders from Bengal as well as Madras' to move to the West Sumatran Settlement.[4] We have a brief sketch of the situation of the Indian immigrants there early in the following century from the writings of Benjamin Heyne (d. 1819), a surgeon and naturalist working for the Company at Madras, who visited Sumatra in 1812. In his remarks on 'Benkulen Society', he writes:

> There are a number of Bengalese settled here, as handicraftsmen and servants. All tailors and washermen at Marlborough are of this description [...] The Bengalese here are mostly, if not all, Mussulmen, and intermarry with the Malays; and soon lose themselves so far, that their progeny look, act, and speak like other Malays [...][5]

Yet another source of Indian immigration into the region came only toward the end of the British administration of Bencoolen, that is, the transportation of Indian convicts. Around 1787,[6] Bencoolen became a penal colony for convicts from Bengal and other parts of British India.[7] The initial importation consisted of about a hundred persons[8] and by 1823, there were between 800 to 900 convicts employed on public works and in the cultivation of spices in the Fort Marlborough districts.[9] The greatest increase in convicts came under the residency of T. S. Raffles (d. 1826) who introduced significant reforms in the penal system in British Southeast Asia.[10]

Beyond his direct work of administration, Raffles was also an energetic chronicler of nearly everything he encountered in the Indonesian archipelago.

In fact, it was in the forests outside Bengkulu that he first saw the large, foul-smelling flower that would come to bear his name.[11] Arriving at Bencoolen, Raffles found himself following the footsteps of William Marsden (d.1836), another of the pioneering orientalists of British Southeast Asia. Given this, it is remarkable that neither Marsden nor Raffles makes mention of *tabot* observances in Bencoolen in their published writings.[12] That such keen observers would overlook so vivid a spectacle seems strange, and tempts one to believe that the celebration was unknown in Bengkulu during the time of Marsden's residency there. However, this may also be due to the fact that as a theme of his work, *The History of Sumatra*, Marsden is preoccupied with discovering and reporting on the 'original' culture of the 'True Malays',[13] and therefore may have intentionally overlooked things such as the *tabot*, which he would have associated with the imported rituals of the South Asian migrants to the Sumatra coast. Likewise, because of the relatively recent nature of Indian immigration and the transfer of the *tabot* tradition to the area, Raffles would not have thought of it as a local phenomenon, and thus apparently did not consider it fitting material to include in his studies of Malay culture.

The first scholarly discussions of *tabot* observances at Bengkulu came only after the Dutch took control of the region in 1825, and for the Dutch, it might have seemed a more established part of the local cultural scene. *Tabot* has, for instance, been described in some detail in the third volume of Buddingh's *Reizen*,[14] and a Jawi manuscript from Bengkulu,[15] where the sacred history marked over the first ten days of Muḥarram was set out and subsequently became the basis for an 1888 article by O. L. Helfrich.[16] Thereafter, there was a brief flurry of commentary on the *tabot* by other Dutch scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,[17] which was seemingly concluded with an epilogue by Philippus Samuel van Ronkel (d.1954) in 1914.[18] At the conclusion of his article on the *tabot*, van Ronkel remarked that it was a dying tradition.[19] However, this pronouncement may have been a bit premature, as, since the middle of the twentieth century, *tabot* observances have become once more a major event in Bengkulu.

The *tabot* tradition's recent renaissance has been closely linked to the activities of the Department of Education and Culture (*Departmen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*), which has been active in both sponsoring aspects of *tabot* performances and producing published works on the subject since the 1970s.[20] This intervention by the modern Indonesian state has served to transform aspects of the public spectacle of Muḥarram observances in Bengkulu. At the same time, however, the work of this governmental agency has also provided

the framework for the survival and regeneration of an older complex of ritual activity, including the practices of a small subgroup of the population—families with links to the South Asian migrants who first brought *tabot* tradition to Bengkulu. These two levels of observance can be traced across the entire ten days leading to ʿĀshūrāʾ.

Description

Shortly after sunset prayers on the eve of the Muslim new year,[21] a small procession makes its way to a local field called Karbala,[22] where a small clump of earth

Fig. 11.1: The gergah of Shaykh Burhanuddin at Bengkulu (photo by R. Michael Feener)

is gathered to be brought to a small shrine (*gergah*)[23] dedicated to Shaykh Burhanuddin (d. *c.*1700); the figure traditionally identified as the Sepoi primarily responsible for the introduction of the *tabot* tradition to Bengkulu.[24] Once this earth from Karbala is installed within the *gergah*, a small group of men connected with Bengkulu's older '*tabot* families' recite prayers, calling down blessings upon the family of the Prophet while making offerings of incense, along with a mixture of strong coffee and spiced water known as *air sobat*.

While all this is happening 'offstage', as it were, most of the rest of the town are making their way toward the field from across the governor's residence in the city centre. The crowds assemble to watch performances of a number of different local genres of music and dance on a floodlit stage constructed specially for the occasion by the provincial government. These range from dances with exaggerated imitation of animal movements to stylised battle reenact-

Fig. 11.2: Tabot floats in a Muḥarram procession at Bengkulu (photo by R. Michael Feener)

ments set to music. Considerable pride is taken in these performances, which are usually organised as competitions between groups representing the city's various neighbourhoods. Every afternoon, in the weeks leading up to the celebration, these groups can be found in yards and vacant lots throughout the town practising for their moment in the spotlight.

On 2 Muḥarram, the construction of the *tabot* officially commences. The *tabot* are wooden and paper cenotaphs built atop pushcarts and decorated with various motifs. One of the most prominent is a representation of the winged steed Buraq, Muḥammad's mount during his 'night journey' (*miʿraj*) through the heavens to within 'two bow's lengths' of God.[25] Over the past two decades, however, new symbols have also become common on Bengkulu *tabot*, particularly the *garuda*, the Indonesian emblem of the state, and the iconic flower, *Rafflesia Arnoldii*. Over the next week, dozens of *tabot* displaying a range of symbols are constructed all across Bengkulu by various neighbourhood associa-

Fig. 11.3: Dol and tassa drum bands used in the tabot observances at Bengkulu (photo by R. Michael Feener)

tions, social clubs and governmental offices, as well as by the families who have traditionally served as the custodians of the *tabot* tradition.

Some of the funds for the construction of *tabot* were raised by donations gathered from the community through the *ikan-ikan* (fish) and *burung-burung* (bird) dances performed by wandering troupes carrying large papier-mâché effigies of birds or fish to the accompaniment of drums, bells and violins or flutes.[26] The troupes travel around the neighbourhoods of Bengkulu and when they find the home of a willing donor, they stop for a performance; the music intensifies, and one from the group begins dancing with the bamboo and paper bird or fish frame covering his head and torso. Traditionally, the *ikan-ikan* and *burung-burung* are performed on the evenings of 3–4 Muḥarram. Today, the fund-raising processions of bird and fish dancers through the various quarters of Bengkulu form part of the 'unofficial' side of the *tabot* festivities. While they are making their rounds, many of these same dances are being performed on the floodlit stage in the centre of town as part of the official programme sponsored by the provincial government. Similar coincidences of formal and informal circuits of performance continue apace throughout the length of the *tabot* observances, with state-sponsored spectacles sometimes complementing, and at other times competing with, the more established ritual practices and carnivalesque entertainments.[27]

In an analogous official overlay to traditional observances, the governor hosts a formal ceremony at his official residence in the centre of town on 5 Muḥarram. There, an assemblage of various local dignitaries sit in the shaded verandah watching staged performances of 'traditional' music and dance groups, as well as marching bands. Offstage, on that same day, a ceremony will be held in which the standards (*penja*) and other materials used in the *tabot* observances are ritually cleaned and prepared. This ceremony takes place at the *gergah*, where members of the old *tabot* families burn incense and prepare buckets of limewater, milk and *air sobat* in which to ritually cleanse the *penja*—metal standards representing an outstretched hand, which in traditional Shiʿī iconography are used to symbolise the five pure members of the Prophet's household. This is followed by an energetic seven-times circumambulation of the *gergah* and a ritual feast of savory rice *nasi kebuli*.

That night, the first 'battle of the drums' (*beruji dol*) takes place as drum groups from different areas of town assemble in what seem like war camps. The drummers then process around the city led by the *penja* standards and flags, and followed by crowds that grow with each neighbourhood that they pass. The processions stop briefly at each simple *gergah*[28] and salute it by tilting

the bamboo poles topped by the *penja* so that they touch each *gergah* visited. As the standards touch, the visitors shout '*al-salam ʿalaykum*' and the crowd responds '*wa ʿalaykum salam*'. The next night is followed by another *beruji dol*, proceeding across the city in the opposite direction. Other ritual processions follow on subsequent nights, culminating on the evening of 9 Muḥarram, when the disparate circuits of shrine-focused ritual, popular entertainment and state-sanctioned performance come together. On that night, *tabot* are brought from their neighbourhoods to the park, where they are lined up before the stage where the troupes of fish and bird dancers, *dol* drum ensem-

Fig. 11.4: Practising for Muḥarram mock battle dances in Bengkulu (photo by R. Michael Feener)

bles, and other performers judged to be the best in their respective categories over previous nights of officially-regulated competition, entertain the crowd. There are also several masquers on hand to excite the crowd to dancing after they have become numbed by the long-winded series of official speeches given over the course of the evening's proceedings.

The next day is ʿĀshūrāʾ, and early that morning the *tabot* are brought to the governor's residence where they line up for the culmination of the Muḥarram observances, that is, the procession through the city to Karbala. It is the largest event of the year in Bengkulu, with huge crowds assembled all along the parade

Fig. 11.5: Ritual specialists dismantling the penja packets from discarded tabot floats on 10 Muḥarram (photo by R. Michael Feener)

route. After yet another round of speeches by various officials sheltering in the shade of the governor's porch, the drums begin to play and the procession begins, with dozens of *tabot* being led through town accompanied by standard and flag bearers. For a short time in the 1990s, the provincial government attempted to direct the procession to the beach where the colourful wood and paper cenotaphs could be photogenically disposed of in the waves of the Indian Ocean. Local tradition, however, dictates that the procession ends at the cemetery known locally as Karbala, and that the *tabot* be dismantled there.[29] Those in the crowd who follow the procession remove their shoes before entering the cemetery. They then crowd around the ritual specialists who burn incense, read prayers and make offerings of coffee and *air sobat*, while meticulously disassembling the *penja* by placing the metal standards into a basket for safekeeping until the following year. As the ritual specialists take apart the *tabot*, they often throw the paper flowers and other decorations to children in the crowd. The rest of the *tabot* is then discarded in an empty lot nearby, after which many of the families present settle down in the shade of an ancient tree in the centre of the cemetery to enjoy a picnic lunch.

Tabot *today: cultural politics and 'Shiʿi ritual' in post-1979 Indonesia*

This revival of the *tabot* tradition was, to a great extent, a phenomenon of New Order Indonesian political culture. It is but one example of a national effort to increase awareness of local cultures that falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Culture (Departmen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan). The work of this governmental office in Bengkulu greatly facilitated the revival and reinvention of the *tabot* tradition since the 1970s, through the Project for the Research and Registration of Local Cultures (Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah) and the Project for the Inventory and Documentation of Local Cultures (Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Kebudayaan Daerah). These government projects were promoted under Suharto's New Order with a mandate for 'the mining and enrichment of regional cultures',[30] so that these regional cultures could be 'cultivated and revived'.[31] The organisational structure of these projects is designed to define these local cultures as examples of 'cultural diversity', while at the same time fixing them firmly within a unified national framework according to the Indonesian national slogan of 'Unity in Diversity' ('*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*'). In doing so, these projects produced several publications dealing specifically with the *tabot* as a manifestation of the 'culture of Bengkulu'.[32]

With provincial government sponsorship, *tabot* traditions were reconstructed as a kind of cultural fair in which cultural symbols of identity could be exhibited and communicated to both local participants and external observers. In fact, this has been officially proclaimed to be so in popular publications such as Bengkulu's daily newspaper, *Harian Semarak*, where during the 1992 Festival *Tabot*, a front-page lead article proclaimed that the festivities were meant to be 'just like [the] Sriwijaya Festival in South Sumatra and the Lake Toba Festival in North Sumatra [...] a tourist promotion for those areas [who have succeeded in promoting their local cultures at national and international levels]'.[33] Thus, the *tabot* came to function in a way not unlike the created community pavilions at the Indonesian nationalist theme park, Taman Mini Indonesia Indah in Jakarta, where several aspects of culture, such as traditional architecture and wedding clothes, are presented to members and outsiders alike for the purpose of both displaying and communicating Indonesian provincial and national identity.[34]

As the tradition developed as a means of imagining the community of Bengkulu, it underwent significant changes in both content and form. Eric Hobsbawm notes that while invented traditions often put great emphasis on specific practices, the values which these practices are used to symbolise are often vaguely defined, that is, 'their significance lay precisely in their undefined universality'.[35] In order for such an undefined universality to be achieved, the *tabot* has first to be separated from its earlier religious associations. In such (re-)invented traditions such as those of the *tabot*, religious elements that may have cosmologically established one's place in the universe are downplayed in favour of the more immediate concerns of defining one's self in relation to other parallel categories within the segmented (post-)colonial schemata of ethnolinguistic hierarchies. In this way, the *tabot* is gradually stripped of its more religious and potentially disruptive[36] associations, and instead, is evolved into a kind of local cultural fair, at least on the level of public spectacle.[37]

With these developments, we can see a clear movement in conceptions of *tabot* observances towards transcending and/or obscuring specifically Shiʿī aspects of religious devotionalism and confessional communitarianism. A very clear statement of just such intent can be found in the pronouncement of the provincial governor of Bengkulu, Razie Jachya, in an article that appeared on the front page of Bengkulu's largest daily newspaper on 5 Muḥarram 1992. Printed in the article were the words he pronounced upon the opening of the *tabot* festivities earlier that week:

> The ceremonies of *tabot* are not religious services, but only a means for the preservation and development of local culture. Do not mix-up the *tabot* with religion.[38]

The religious dimensions of *tabot* observances are thus intentionally downplayed in the creation of a cultural performance type of ritual, intended to expedite the assimilation of as much of the local population as possible.

Ritual modes of religious and cultural change

Contemporary *tabot* observances track movements across two scales of ritual economy: a small scale of devotional regiment, and a large scale of state-supported public spectacle. The recent historical development of the latter, in particular, provides a striking example of the way in which, as Catherine Bell has expressed, the construction of a ritual tradition 'effectively maximize[s] a high-profile identity for a group, even while minimizing any real rift over fundamentals with the neighboring groups'.[39] An important part of this process involves a degree of ambiguity at the level of personal conviction for individual participants. Such a situation is vividly illustrated by Ronald Grimes in his study of ritual actions being performed in a 'modern' setting, thus emphasising the variety of viewpoints held by various participants as to what it is that they are doing. 'Some saw it as ritual or communal celebration; some thought of it as informal education. Some held that it was a way of preserving culture; others, a way of transforming it.'[40] This divergence of opinion as to what a particular activity signifies is often reflected in the ambiguity of the meanings of various symbols employed in the particular activity. Bell contends that such ambiguity necessarily precludes any sort of 'consensus based on shared beliefs', and thus also suggests that 'ritualized activities do *not* promote belief or conviction'.[41]

This move to disengage issues of 'belief' from the practice of ritual makes an important intervention into academic discussions. Arguments along these lines have been more extensively developed by Adam Seligman, Robert Weller, Michael Puett and Bennett Simon, who clearly assert that 'ritual cannot be read as representing a worldview'.[42] Critiquing modern visions of ritual action that tend to emphasise 'inner states like sincerity of belief that may not always be relevant to the social and cognitive contexts of ritual action',[43] they further argue that an important function of ritual is that it 'teaches us to live within and between different boundaries rather than seeking to absolutize them [...]'. Ritual then creates a shared framework that 'recognizes the inherent ambiguity built into social life and its relationships',[44] in which 'its performative

nature is typically more important than its denotative meaning'.[45] Understanding these dimensions of ritual can help a better appreciation of the ways in which the *tabot* tradition in Bengkulu could experience such a striking modern revival in a form almost completely divorced from the doctrinal dictates of its erstwhile Shiʿī religious roots.

The complex ways in which ritual has functioned within broader contexts of internal Muslim pluralism have been productively explored in a series of provocative studies of Fatimid Cairo (tenth-twelfth centuries CE), where an esoteric Ismāʿīlī Shiʿī elite ruled over an overwhelming Sunnī majority.[46] Important insights on analogous developments can be gained, for example, through the study of public ritual in Fāṭimid Cairo by Paula Sanders, which demonstrates how the commemoration of Shiʿī holidays, including ʿĀshūrāʾ and Ghadir Khumm, come to be part of the ritual *lingua franca* of Fatimid ceremonial, characterised by 'broad appeal and little if any explicit Ismāʿīlī content'.[47] Likewise, in an insightful study of inscriptions from Fāṭimid Cairo, Irene Bierman has turned her attention to the multiple ways in which public displays of religious symbols can serve simultaneously to communicate different meanings to different 'beholders'.[48] As she states, Shiʿī religious symbols placed prominently in public spaces 'were viewed by a broad general audience. But the meanings those signs conveyed depended on the differing perceptual judgments of the varying groups within this audience.'[49] Here again, the importance of distinguishing (ritual or visual) form from (doctrinal) content becomes clear. With this long historical perspective of reflecting on developments in medieval Cairo, Bierman thus emphasises the tendency of forms to outlive their original intended meanings.[50]

How may these insights from studies of medieval Shiʿī ritual in predominantly Sunnī contexts help us to understand Bengkulu's *tabot* tradition in its modern manifestations? Their importance lies in the way in which they can point toward a method of negotiating the distance between the *tabot* tradition's various registers of social meaning: 1) as a ritual complex commemorating Ḥusayn's martyrdom; 2) as a conglomeration of traditional entertainments; and 3) as a state-sponsored public spectacle. Understanding the complexity of the diverse ways in which this tradition of ʿAlid piety has developed in Bengkulu requires us to be able to deal with all these aspects simultaneously.

In a recent Indonesian booklet on *tabot*, Harapandi Dahri has characterised Muḥarram observances at Bengkulu as no longer a reflection of 'Shiʿī ideology, but rather [as] having been transformed into the region's 'local genius' (*kearifan*

lokal), and even as a 'cultural ornament' (*sebagai ornamen budaya*).[51] He may be correct to the extent that on its largest scale, the *tabot* is today observed in ways that intentionally downplay its traditional roots in Shiʿī practice and 'ideology', to facilitate both its popular function as a local cultural fair, and its political function of expressing aspects of regional and national Muslim identity. However, Dahri's inability to deal with the continuing and evolving religious dimensions of the *tabot* tradition is a result of his limiting attention only to 'official' transcripts and observance of 'onstage' events. Indeed, it seems that the devotional practices of ʿAlid piety performed by the extended families comprising the core of that mode of ʿĀshūrāʾ observance has been either missed during his ethnographic fieldwork, or wilfully ignored for some reason that is not made explicit in his study. However, acknowledging the simultaneous existence of diverse ways of relating to the *tabot* tradition could have helped here, in both presenting a more nuanced interpretation of the overall ritual complex, as well as avoiding the need for any simplistic evolutionary model of a 'transformation' from religious rite to cultural ornament.

Indeed, opening ourselves up to the possibility that a complex ritual tradition like *tabot* can carry a diverse range of meanings for audiences at any given historical moment could help us better appreciate the range of ways in which it has been observed since its introduction in the eighteenth century. The appropriate model here then would not be one of unilinear evolution, but rather of the incorporation and ongoing adaptation of multiple elements from the rich and diverse legacy of Islam into the creation of local Muslim traditions. In fact, I would argue that what we can see at work along these lines, both in history and in the contemporary practice of *tabot*, could help us in developing a broader framework for examining other manifestations of ʿAlid piety across the history of Muslim Southeast Asia.

For more than a century, historians and scholars of Indonesian literatures have struggled with the interpretation of what they have perceived to be 'Shiʿī elements' in the history of Islam in the region.[52] Some of the oldest surviving Islamic epigraphy and narrative textual traditions from the region contain material that may be linked with specifically Shiʿī traditions from other parts of the Muslim world.[53] Citing the work of Brakel and other earlier scholars, including J. J. Ras and Winstedt, Edwin Wieringa has advanced a model of 'de-Shiʿitisation', in which later developments of Islamisation in the Indonesian archipelago 'gradually purged [...] elements of Perso-Indian origin' to the point that 'Shiʿitic traces in Indonesian Islam are generally not recognised as such by the common (Sunnî) believer'.[54] Indeed, during fieldwork conducted

in Bengkulu in the 1990s, I found that even among those families assuming a central role as custodians of the *tabot* tradition, there was considerable ambivalence on the extent to which their observances of Muḥarram, or their practice of Islam more generally, should be regarded as specifically Shiʿī. I thus argue that what some outside observers have regarded as 'Shiʿī elements' might be better understood as manifestations of ʿAlid piety.

I also question if it is necessary to propose a linear, 'orthodoxising' trajectory on these developments. We simply do not know enough about the earlier history of Muslim vernacular literatures in the region to make such claims with any degree of confidence. On the other hand, the fact that such elements have survived transmission through manuscript copies of the nineteenth century seems to suggest that any 'purge' was not pursued in a comprehensive or totalising manner. Furthermore, the course of developments in textual traditions around the figure of ʿAlī in other Southeast Asian Muslim vernaculars gives evidence of a high degree of variation in the ways in which these figures have been integrated into broader cultural matrices of the region—ranging from ʿAlī as the wise judge in Malay *hikayat*[55] to a key figure in Bugis and Javanese manuals of sexual magic.[56] Thus, it appears at least equally plausible to propose alternative models for understanding the developments of these traditions of ʿAlid piety that emphasise the integration of diverse elements of Islam into accumulative and inclusive local traditions, instead of fitting them within a teleological trajectory of reform along lines recognisable by modern conceptions of Sunnī 'orthodoxy'.

Given the diverse and overlapping vectors of Islamisation in the region's history, traditions of ʿAlid piety in Muslim Southeast Asia need to be understood in ways that go beyond simplistic divisions of Shiʿa and Sunnī, particularly as these categories have been re-energised in political polemics since the late twentieth century. Far from representing simply 'traces' of earlier stages in the history of Southeast Asian Islam, diverse traditions of textual production and ritual practice have developed in complex ways and continue to function on multiple levels in many local communities. The modern revival of the *tabot* tradition in Bengkulu may thus be seen as a striking example of how historical legacies of contact with Shiʿa from other parts of the Muslim world have not only been adopted, but also continuously reinvented in diverse and dynamic ways over the course of the history of Islam in Southeast Asia.

12

BURLESQUING MUḤARRAM PROCESSIONS INTO CARNIVALESQUE *BORIA*[1]

Jan van der Putten

Introduction

During the first ten days of the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar (Muḥarram), the death of the Prophet Muḥammad's grandson Ḥusayn is commemorated through various manifestations of ʿAlid piety in diverse Muslim communities. While symbolic re-enactments of the suffering of this martyr are emphasised to dramatic effect in some Shiʿa communities, in other cases Muḥarram observances have evolved into public spectacles, some of which are festive occasions that have even come to attract non-Shiʿa participation. In some parts of Southeast Asia, local Muslim communities have enthusiastically embraced Muḥarram traditions introduced by South Asian Muslim migrants,[2] adapting them to emphasise further carnivalesque elements in the form of noisy processions of people dressing up for the occasion, while merchants, artists and vendors contribute to the bustle of the celebration and try to make some money from it.

Masquerading and participating in (pseudo-) religious processions spells trouble and almost inevitably prompts a comparison with Carnival, a Roman Catholic-inspired feast in which official and well-established norms are trans-

gressed and inverted during a privileged time of festive freedom. Carnival—the feast of meat and flesh before a period of abstinence (Lent)—is an event in the Western calendar that provides the people with a space where they can temporarily forget the chores and duties of everyday life only to repent afterwards:

> During the annual cycle of Lenten sermons, Carnival behaviour served the preacher as the obvious, proximate reason for repentance and contrition. Because this Christian attention was embedded in the calendar of springtime, the Church's sense of the Carnival–Lent boundary tended over time to fuse and become confused with lay people's celebration of the arrival of springtime. Carnival festivities, occurring in February or early March, grew up as complex Christian and non-Christian seasonal themes, in which masking and parading about as animals and wild forces of a reawakening nature were as important as banqueting, carousing and having one last 'fling' before Lent.[3]

In some parts of the Netherlands, Carnival is celebrated by festivities including fancy dress parades and processions according to certain themes. To emphasise that 'normal' rules and regulations do not apply during this festive season, the towns are given new names, and the mayor symbolically relinquishes his tasks and hands his Chain of Office to the Prince Carnival. Of course, such a period of grace only allows for inconsequential offences and minor transgressions: 'Carnival does not give license to do whatever one feels like', as one organiser of a 2008 Carnival parade in the town of Breda was quoted as saying. Because some excesses did occur, some regulations were reinstated to prevent the situation spiralling out of control.[4] Carnival and its excesses perhaps may be considered as having the social function of a 'safety valve' for the people in the community to let off steam and wash away mental fatigue and frustrations by consuming excessive amounts of alcohol and suspending some of the prevalent norms of civilised conduct.[5] Once the folly and hangovers have abated, 'normal' life can take its course again. Carnival also creates an ambience of fraternisation among members of a community, in which sense it may be seen as 'a way of dreaming with others, publicly and responsively. Its qualities of inversion, of ambivalence, of conspicuous consumption and excess have to do with removal and escape from social calculation.'[6]

Masquerade, carnival, excesses, parades, religious travesty, inversion of social norms and burlesque shows are terms we also encounter in the discussions on *boria*, a cultural performance that historically may be traced to Muḥarram processions in nineteenth-century Penang, as has been emphasised in quite a number of academic papers and books about *boria*. This paper does not purport to excavate the 'original' roots of *boria* in an attempt to determine how much of the cultural material agrees with or differs from

authentic Shiʿa, Sunnī, Hindu or other religious rites and ceremonies. Reconstructing a 'genealogy of performance' to discover its pure origin is doomed to fail: 'What is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity.'[7] In his book about circum-Atlantic performance cultures, Joseph Roach examines how groups recreate their traditions in the midst of other communities with their own cultural practices and traditions. In his introductory theoretical chapter, Roach posits that cultural renewal entails or requires a 'complicity of memory and forgetting' in a process that he calls 'surrogation'—fitting in satisfactory alternatives into the cavities created by loss in a network of social relations.[8] In this chapter I will examine how such a process of surrogation may work in the context of *boria*, which may be considered a cultural product of inter-Indian Ocean performance traditions. How were loss of memory and intentional forgetting compensated for in the ongoing renewal of performance traditions, and how did communities perform their pasts in the presence of others? As I shall argue, around the turn of the twentieth century, *boria* was stripped of its religious meaning and gradually took on a more commercial (popular) culture garb. To illustrate this process I will discuss sources from the 1910s to 1930s that illustrated and commented upon this change in the form. First, however, I will give a concise overview of some forms of performances connected to Muḥarram rituals to provide some context for the 'genealogical tree' of performances that, to a certain extent, may be considered as being 'related' to *boria*.

Muḥarram processions

In various Shiʿī communities, the first ten days of Muḥarram are observed in commemoration of the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Ḥusayn and many members of his family at the battle of Karbalāʾ in 680 CE. These commemorations may take the form of passion plays which re-enact events leading up to Ḥusayn's demise, his brother Ḥasan's death and the fate of the other members of the Prophet Muḥammad's family; the recitation of solemn dirges to mourn Ḥusayn and his family; and processions in which replicas of his tomb (*tabut* or *taʿziya*) are carried around while male followers symbolically join in his suffering by implementing self-flagellation. While the religious meaning of mourning the death of Imām Ḥusayn and the fate of his family may be prevalent in Shiʿa communities in Iran, Iraq and South Asia, ostensibly such meaning changed and dissipated when the practice was transferred to other regions with

a different socio-religious environment. In India, the observed practices during Muḥarram became a contested issue as the Shiʿa formed a minority across the region, and practices became conflated and mixed with rituals originating from other traditions, such as the various Sunnī, Hindu, Buddhist and other belief systems. The constant renewal of ritual practices inevitably made Muḥarram processions and rituals into a very eclectic mixture, ranging from the observance of sacred mourning, either in public or private gatherings, to a more profane celebration, as always involving vendors, merchants, acrobats, dancers and other performers to liven up the atmosphere.[9]

As the scope of this chapter does not allow for discussion at length of even a fraction of the different manifestations of the practices observed during Muḥarram in the Muslim world, a few points that issue from the literature about the rituals must suffice. Local observances changed over time due to the changing socio-economic circumstances of the agents responsible for the realisation of the rituals, and changes in the religious and cultural environment in which they were practised. Much of the early dissemination of the rituals outside the Indian subcontinent was a result of the export of military personnel, convicts and indentured labourers to other parts of the British colonial empire and beyond. In each region the rituals were adjusted to new circumstances by mixing with local practices and local practitioners. Many reports mention that the observance of Muḥarram rituals sparked off and intensified tensions that led to violence between groups and individuals in competing neighbourhoods, or between groups from a different social class and/or religious denominations. Muḥarram processions were a means for communities to present themselves in the public space of their towns and cities, where they displayed their religious symbols or performed their shows.

Similar to the attire and excessively-adorned floats of samba schools in Rio de Janeiro or carnival processions in the southern parts of the Netherlands, building and displaying symbols for Muḥarram processions generates much competition between groups who want to outdo each other in showing their religious or communal fervour. In this context, Mosselas describes the tensions in the first half of the nineteenth century in Bombay between a number of different groups, such as local Shiʿa and Sunnī, recently-arrived Shiʿa immigrants from Arabia and Persia, and Company soldiers, a group disliked by the local population. In certain years, these communities were involved in a 'Muḥarram competition' with each other to show the world that they could build the biggest and most elaborate *taʿziya* (replica of Ḥusayn's tomb) which would make the others pale in splendour. As may be expected, however, the

violence resulting from that competition led to British intervention which banned a Shiʿa type of observance and favoured the Sunnī procession with *taʿziyas* and banners.[10] At the beginning of the twentieth century, the tensions again mounted in the city of Bombay, but this time the violence turned against the British.[11]

Paradoxically, in Trinidad at the beginning of the 1880s, Muḥarram processions were used to galvanise a common identity among the plantation workers and show the power they could muster in protest against deteriorating working conditions and reduced wages. Because of frequent protest marches, colonial authorities disallowed participants in the Muḥarram processions of 1884 from taking their usual routes through the towns of San Fernando and Port of Spain. The authorities had only granted Muslims the right to participate, but prohibited Indian labourers of other faiths and Creoles to become involved with the procession. Despite the official ban, the organisers went on with the procession via the contested routes until they were stopped by gunfire at the edge of the town of San Fernando, thus causing a large number of casualties. For the labourers, the ritual celebration of Muḥarram formed a means to forge a common identity that cut across religious and ethnic boundaries, as well as the boundaries that existed between the different sugar estates, which totalled 109 plantations employing 70,000 Indian labourers in 1884. Muḥarram was the one time in the year when they could invert the normal oppression and lack of freedom they experienced and 'take over' the towns which were out of bounds for indentured labourers during the rest of the year.[12]

A similar public showing of a certain common identity also seems to have been the main motivation for Sunnī Muslims in Darjeeling to organise the annual Muḥarram procession. Sunnī Muslims form a minority living among a vast majority of Buddhists and Hindus who have ample opportunities to present their religious identity through a number of festivals. For Muslims in the region, however, Muḥarram festivities provide the only possible opportunity to display their religious identity, as other important dates of Islamic feasts are charged with too much religious significance and are not canonically-sanctioned public celebrations. 'At Muḥarram the government sweeps the streets for us', was the explanation given by one of the organisers of a procession when asked why Sunnī Muslims would organise a procession which is, unsurprisingly, not uncontested in the community.[13]

In view of the prevalence of these issues in the literature, it will come as no surprise that we also find violence, contestation against hybrid forms being celebrated in a Sunnī environment, and new meanings attached to the

Muḥarram processions in the reports and discussions about this practice in the Malay world. In the next section I will present a general exposé of the early performances of Muḥarram processions in Penang, providing the background for a more detailed discussion about developments during the first decades of the twentieth century, when the form was increasingly being contested by reformist forces who were set on purifying ritual practices in the Malay world.

Muḥarram in Penang

All sources seem to agree that the elaborate observance of Muḥarram rituals was introduced into the Malay world by South Asian regiments and convicts by the end of the eighteenth century. Prior to sending convicts to the Malay Peninsula, for some time around the turn of the nineteenth century the British authorities also used Bengkulu as a penal station, which accounts for the introduction of Muḥarram processions in regions along the west coast of Sumatra.[14] By the time indentured labourers were to expand significantly the Indian immigrant communities in the Malay Peninsula in the late nineteenth century, Muḥarram processions were an established tradition in the racially diverse communities in Penang—although, reportedly, with few followers among Malays. Soldiers and labourers of South Asian descent had reinvented themselves by practising and inevitably changing their rituals, while other groups would also join in by performing their own parts, eventually also including Malays.

Jonas Daniel Vaughan, a superintendent of police in Penang in the 1850s, wrote extensively about the life and customs of Malays in Penang, about whom, surprisingly for a mid-nineteenth-century British officer, he was extremely positive: 'one who has been intimately connected with Malays for several years [...] becomes impressed with their good qualities to the exclusion of the bad, and he sees much in them to admire'.[15] However, his opinion about the offspring of Malay mothers and 'Kling or Bengali' fathers could hardly have been more different. He was still quite positive about the first generation as they 'possess all the courage of the mother combined with the activity, intelligence and cunning of the father'.[16] But descendants of the second and third generation, Vaughan opined, had degenerated into cheats, brothel owners and opium smokers, 'the vilest of the vile'. We may keep his biased view about these people in mind when we read the first report about the Muḥarram rites as observed by Indian immigrant and Jawi Peranakan communities:

> They [Jawi Peranakan] join heart and soul in all amusements of the Mohurum and Dusserah festivals and will perform every species of buffoonery for the purpose of

> obtaining money. They disguise themselves in a variety of ways to prove amusing, some dress as beggars of various nations, others as birds and beasts; some of them study the habits and movements of wild beasts so well, especially the tiger, that their imitations of the brute are splendid; some assume the attire of Europeans and dance various fashionable dances including the polka, their performances are rewarded by showers of cents principally subscribed by Europeans and Portuguese who are attracted out on such occasions; their love of fun and devilry leads them to imitate burlesquely all the ceremonies observed by the Mahomedans and Hindus of India, to the amusement of bystanders. They also form bands, led by some desperate fellows, and attack parties of Klings and Bengalies who may be devoutly parading with their images; the attack begins in fun but eventually ends in blows and even bloodshed; the principle work of the Police is to watch these bands of Jawi-bukans who issue from their houses merely for the purpose of annoying the real devotees. Such scenes are despised by the Malays, they will not join in them nor will the most respectable portion of them visit the town during the celebration of heathen festivals,—no milder term can they apply to the orgies of the Mohorum, and they identify them with all other heretical rites.[17]

Vaughan's description clearly depicts many characteristics of a carnivalesque rendering of religious observances which caused problems, but may also be seen as a temporary inversion of social norms after which life would return to its everyday rhythm. We meet buffoonery, mockery, impersonating stereotypes of other ethnic groups and animals, dressing up like Europeans and dancing the polka, and the almost inevitable disturbances of the peace by groups of rowdy youngsters who followed in the processions. If it were not for Vaughan's bias and the apparent abhorrence felt by respectable Malays, the description seems to show little more than just a noisy, carnivalesque procession which, if continued, indubitably could have become a great touristic asset similar to Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

But dark clouds loomed on the horizon. South Asian convicts reportedly teamed up with members of existing secret societies; ethnic groups that were considered criminal by a modern administration could not possibly deal with transgressing subjects who inverted the social order that colonial authorities had established. Law and order were of paramount importance in a nineteenth-century colonial state that could not allow indigenous subjects to stage rituals that were unclear to its officials, as they could not readily classify them as practices reflecting 'pure' Shiʿa religion or South Asian culture. Even worse was the fear that the Malays might practise or emulate these rituals. The 'naive and innocent Malays' were already considered to be under too much duress and bad influence from immigrants who had introduced the murderous thug cult, presumed to be connected to the legendary assassins of Alamut, to the

indigenous population.[18] This presumed influence was partly the result of a lack of attention paid by the British authorities to Malay communities in Penang and in Seberang Perai, the region on the Malay Peninsula opposite Penang, which were divided into *jumaah* (community, group) around people with a certain religious authority, such as *haji* ('pilgrim') and *kadi* ('Islamic court judge'), often from Arab or South Asian extraction. With intensifying social tensions in the 1850s and 1860s, these *jumaah* became increasingly linked to Chinese secret societies and eventually established separate organisations: the White and Red Flag Societies. At a certain stage these Malay/Muslim organisations may even have merged with their Chinese counterparts.[19] The competition between these secret societies increasingly led to instances of violence, for which the month of Muḥarram with its processions seems to have been a good occasion. During the Muḥarram observances of 1867, violent clashes escalated into a major riot that lasted for ten days involving several thousand Chinese and Malay members of the organisations. Only after their leaders had agreed to stop the violence and pay the fines imposed by an impotent police force of a mere 140 men did the riots abate; measures were then taken to remove the secrecy around these organisations and segregate the ethnic groups so that no Malay could become a member of a Chinese organisation.

In his study on Malay secret societies, Mahani Musa argues that as the British authorities thought they had dealt with these secret organisations in a satisfactory manner, they actually thrived and expanded after the 1867 riots by way of *boria* troupes who recruited new members to these societies. The Penang authorities qualified *boria* and Muḥarram observances as religious practices, which they decided not to abolish as an indication of their tolerance towards religion. Only in 1877, when public disturbances spread too widely, were *boria* shows temporarily banned. Apparently, issuing an official ban on Malay secret societies in 1882 had the effect of exponentially expanding the number of *boria* troupes, as they were used to cover up criminal schemes of the White and Red Flag organisations. This led to a lot of violence around the turn of the twentieth century in Penang and transformed some districts of Georgetown into no-go zones. At the beginning of the twentieth century, police surveillance became stricter and gradually the influence of the organisations reduced until they petered out in the second half of the 1930s.[20]

Boria

It may be surmised that, as secret societies appropriated Muḥarram rituals as a means to recruit new members, *boria* gradually lost its religious character

and became increasingly carnivalesque and rowdy. However, it is quite difficult to trace the 'artistic' developments of *boria* as a performance from around the 1870s onwards as we lack extensive descriptions or reports available from that period. In retrospect, one can construct the general development of a form that was introduced by Indian sepoys and convicts from an eclectic South Asian tradition, which was adopted by Jawi Peranakan groups who further appropriated and popularised it among the Malays in Penang and beyond. Helen Fujimoto indicates such a gradual acculturation of the form in four stages; around the 1870s members of the Jawi Peranakan community took the lead in celebrations, while they also encouraged the involvement of Malay participants.[21] Such an observation, however, does not seem to be based on much contemporaneous material. Mahani Musa's argument that *boria*'s popularity can be explained by linking it to secret societies and their recruitment of new blood is attractive, but seems to overemphasise the violence that often accompanied *boria* while downplaying social and commercial factors. Although the development of *boria* from the 1870s onwards is certainly a topic that deserves further research, I would argue that the period itself was significant, as by that time a highly successful commercialisation of the performing art scene was well under way, fuelled by forms such as *bangsawan*, *stamboel*, *mendu*, *wayang wong* and others.[22] Matthew Cohen speaks of 'a hybrid popular theatre movement, a network encompassing much of South and Southeast Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries'[23] which originated in the Parsi theatre of Bombay. *Boria* became part of this network and the performances extended beyond Penang, and beyond the communities who had introduced cultural practices it derived from.

At some stage of the development, the singing of dirges accompanied by the sound of sticks hit on the floor or against each other and the imitation of animals, in movement as well as dress, started to change into groups of dressed-up youths who would go around the houses of affluent citizens to collect money in return for singing a few songs accompanied by music and performing dances in fancy-dress costume. Topical songs and comical sketches were added at a certain time, and—like the theme and costume of that Muḥarram—were decided upon by the leader of the band, also the lead singer and composer of the songs, generally known as *tukang karang*.[24] A report about the 1906 *boria* season stated that the Russian–Japanese war had been the major theme of the 50 odd *boria* troupes that year.[25] Another report may serve as an indication of the performance's popularity in the first decade of the twentieth century, as the disgruntled reporter wrote that 'every little

Kampong has its Borea party, and they nightly visit all the Chinese clubs and principal Malay residences, starting soon after sunset and only ending at daybreak'.[26]

Arthur Wedderburn Hamilton, another member of the Malayan police force, gives a detailed description of a semi-professional *boria* troupe and its *tukang karang*, which he describes as a manager who would finance the annual enterprise and take a percentage of the profits after the festival. He also gives details about the costumes and musical instruments that had to be procured, and 'star turns' or special star performers that had to be selected from a group of friends or perhaps from outside the normal gang. Hamilton does not mention the inclusion of comical sketches, only that the group could occasionally play out a 'mirthful tale' about a topical event, and mimicry of a dance or manners identified with a certain ethnic group.[27] The performances at wealthy people's premises took up about 20–30 minutes, by which time another troupe would already be waiting at the gate. This change between groups could easily lead to violent clashes between performers, as is quite often mentioned in the reports. On 10 Muḥarram, the shows would continue all night long, and the following morning the troupe would look for a quiet place near a stream for a short cleansing ceremony, after which they would have a picnic, perhaps dance with a *ronggeng* girl, and divide the money. Hamilton also reported that in Singapore and Malacca *boria* was staged in the month of Safar (the second month of the Islamic calendar), when youths and their chaperones would go out to a stream or the sea to cleanse themselves and have fun.[28]

In contrast to other reports, Hamilton was extremely positive about the troupes of 'strolling minstrels' whose festivals had once been known for the occasional burst of violence but which had since stopped. He lamented the day when the tradition would cease to exist: 'It would be a thousand pities if the *Boria*s were ever allowed to die out if only for the sake of the opportunity they offer to budding composers, to say nothing of the fun provided free for masses whose lives are dull enough God wot.'[29]

The authorities were much less positive because of the violent clashes, which were downplayed by Hamilton, and also because of the racket that often led to complaints from well-heeled citizens who lived in the neighbourhood of the houses that were frequented by the parties. The government did not ban *boria*, but put restrictions on the number of days that troupes were allowed to perform and required that the people involved should request a permit to play in certain districts and wear certain clothes. The police could, and occasionally did, arrest dressed-up people who failed to show their permit:

> Last night inspector Williams arrested three *Boria* boys, and charged them this morning before Mr Hall with going about the road in a special dress. The magistrate remarked that it was not a serious matter, and cautioned and discharged the defendants. He told them that, if they wished to be dressed in such a manner, they should obtain a license.[30]

Typical for a form that depended on remuneration from members of the audience, and in competition with many others, the troupes had to bring something new every year. One commentator recalled the time he was still in school and saw some of his schoolmates perform *boria* songs in English at McAllister Road in 1888:

> They wore masks, but it was easily discovered that they were not Mohamedans who had taught them to sing and dance in European fashion. The party was credited with making 'tons of money', and its example was followed by others who, in the next and the following years secured the services of non-Mohamedans to teach them new 'stunts'. There were imitations of battles and skirmishes—all nations being represented, besides dancing and singing. The song then the rage was 'Yankee Doodle went to London'. It was such a favourite that it was never missed. In this fashion all the solemnity of the Muharam festival disappeared, and, sad to relate, though the performers made 'piles of money', some of them lost their lives in faction fights, due to unhealthy and uncalled for rivalry.[31]

We again find references to the commercial nature of, or motivation behind the performance, with schoolchildren taking the opportunity to earn some money by singing English 'pop songs'.[32] This source also suggests Muslim origins of the performance and further enhances Mahani Musa's argument about the violent nature and gang connection of the practice. The unnamed commentator of the above quoted report emphasised that the change from religious observances or 'solemn and dull proceedings' to profane celebrations was a rather sudden, dramatic shift which occurred in 1888. Although all reports tend to take the view that it was a more gradual shift, the sudden innovations the commentator described may have had quite an impact as they were followed by other groups in subsequent years. One of these innovations that may have been introduced around the same time was black-face make-up of the players who were referred to as 'Malays impersonating Africans with black and red faces',[33] or as 'Ethiopians' (*anak Habshi*) in Wilkinson's papers on 'Malay Amusements' from 1910. In the same paragraph Wilkinson indicates that the blacked-up faces was just a temporary theme; other years *boria* players could dress up as Cantonese or Tamils.[34] However, black-face *boria* resurfaced in 1925 in a report which also attested that *boria* had become an established art form to the extent that Muslim clubs—such as the Moham-

edan Football Association—organised contests to decide on the best *boria* performance that year. The youngsters from Jalan Baru in Penang won the contest in 1925 as they staged the most spectacular show of a military struggle in which black-faced soldiers formed one of the parties.[35]

By the mid 1920s we also find advertisements from the recently opened New World amusement park in Singapore, in which 'New *Boria*' and '*Boria*' are mentioned in combination with Chinese wayang shows, cinema, zoo, elephant rides, *makyong* from Kelantan and *mendu* theatre. The latter theatrical forms staged well-known classics, such as Abdul Muluk, Siti Zubaidah and Indraputra, and were part of the commercial performance network spreading across the Malay world. The epic stories were much too long to be staged in one go, and therefore a story such as Indraputra was carved up into at least nine instalments.[36]

In a public talk before the Penang Rotary Club in 1937, a well-established member of the Jawi Peranakan community of Penang, Dr Kamil Mohamed Ariff (d.1960), gave a concise exposé of the historical developments of *boria*, paying quite some attention to the contemporary situation of the form. He reported that every year between 50 and 60 groups would perform, which could be roughly divided into 'the tropical songsters',[37] 'the troupes' representing a variety of military regiments from Arabs to Scots, 'the play actors' and 'the *kronchong* parties':

> The Play Actors perform some ancient or modern story, genuine or made-up. In the days of the silent screen too many parties went in for the silent version of acting emulating their heroes of the Wild West. But now there is better balancing of the stories presented and the tendency seems to be towards classical Malay stories which are greatly liked by the ladies, both Malay and Chinese. The *Krongchong* [*sic*] Parties are of recent development and are rightly popular with all classes. They provide the melodies of the season. [...] Another development in *Boria* is the addition of so called extra turns by girls in song and dance after the main performance is over. The demand for artistes this year has been so great that two Malay operas are closing down this season as all their best girls have been engaged by *Boria* parties![38]

It is unclear if there were any differences in venue, occasion or content between these four types of *boria* distinguished by Dr Ariff, but the conflation of popular forms such as *bangsawan*, film and *ronggeng* may be evident from his description, and is also indicated in other reports from the 1930s. Also the 'extra turns by girls', which he indicates as a new development, clearly places *boria* as a serious contender in the competition to get a slice of the cake in the highly volatile market of popular cultural forms in the late 1930s. The popularity of the form in Penang is also borne out by a *boria* competition being

included in the celebration festivities of the coronation of King George VI in May 1937. A newspaper report from early May announced that the competition would last until the early hours of the following morning, and would yield silver cups for three of the performing groups which numbered about thirty in total. During the daytime a Malay procession would be held:

> Typical old Malay music and songs will be heard in the grand Malay procession to be held by the Malay community of Penang as part of the Coronation celebrations on May 15. There will also be *boria* (dance) parties, and cars representing fishing huts, a submarine, a *hadrah* and fishing boat, a Boyanese boat, Malay raft, and elephant, Arab robbers, a big fish, a dragon and a golden peacock.[39]

A motley crew of floats indeed, which indicates that *boria* clearly had been turned into a 'New Year Carnival without any reference whatsoever to the tragedy of Muḥarram', as Dr Ariff contended.[40] In a similar vein *boria* was used to collect money for the Malaya Patriotic Fund which organised simultaneous *boria* shows at the Wembley and New World amusement parks, while UMNO used it post-war to galvanise support for its political agenda.[41] *Boria* had become a colourful show, perhaps only tenuously still connected to the Muslim New Year, but separated from its original religious function to re-enact the tragic death of Imām Ḥusayn. As may be expected and as has been reported in the literature, this sacrilege of Muḥarram processions and other observances did not take place without generating criticism among certain members of the Muslim community.

The mother of all evil

Unsurprisingly, a form in which a bunch of rowdy natives dressed up in 'fantastic' clothes and temporarily took over some highly public spaces in the town in their processions, or kept the neighbourhood awake with loud music and violent brawls, created tensions with the authorities. Although they did not ban the practices altogether, the colonial authorities did restrict the space of *boria* parties by implementing requirements for permits and reducing the number of days available to organise celebrations. Although some Sunnī Muslims could interpret the battle of Karbalā' as a victory of virtue and truth over evil,[42] most did not consider the commemoration of the death of one of the Prophet Muḥammad's grandsons to be an appropriate time for big celebrations. A more widespread tradition among the Sunnī Muslims in the Malay world is to fast on 10 Muḥarram and to break the fast with 'Ashūrā' porridge.[43] There hardly seems to have been observance of Muslim New Year in

the past; special services and prayers in mosques and greetings seem to be rather recent phenomena in the Malay world.[44]

It is unknown how Muslim Malay clerics reacted to the Muḥarram processions of the nineteenth century, but we may surmise that the pressure on them to respond to, and most probably condemn, the practices intensified when an increasing number of Malays and Jawi Peranakan took part. It is only by the 1920s and 1930s that we find published attacks launched in periodicals by members of the reformist quarters directed towards *boria*. For instance, a certain Shaykh Abdullah al-Maghribi in a public lecture in a Muslim club in Penang expounded that beating the drum and playing *boria* were *haram* ('forbidden by Islamic law') and would only lead to sinful squandering of money and lure women and children to come out of their houses, thus inappropriately exposing themselves to males.[45] Criticism along much the same lines had been launched about a decade earlier in 1922 when Muhammad Yusuf bin Sultan Maidin published his first polemic writings to fight the evils brought about by the cultural practices surrounding Muḥarram.

Muhammad Yusuf, the second son of Sultan Maidin, a wealthy cloth merchant born in Madras, was educated in an English-language school in Penang, where he became the chief clerk in the education department. He is quite well-known as a writer of articles for the budding Malay newspapers and of a few books published in the 1920s and early 30s, among which the last known is entitled *Kejatuhan Kaum-kaum Islam dan Pergerakan Baharu* (The Fall of Muslim Communities and the New Movement, 1931). The 'New Movement' of the title appears to refer to the reformation movement that aimed to purify Islam in the Malay world, of which he was a staunch supporter. He was also quite impressed with the activities and ideas of the Ahmadiyya movement and its proponents Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d.1908) and Maulvi Muhammad Ali (d.1951), and he was reported as being a member of the Islamic organisation Anjuman-i-Islam, established after the Muslim Khwaja Kamaluddin (d.1932) had visited the Malay Peninsula.[46] Za'ba (d.1973), a known sympathiser of Ghulam Ahmad's ideas, also connects his name to a booklet that Syed Shaykh al-Hady's (d.1934) Jelutong press published in 1933: *Risalat Ahmadiyyah* or *Siapakah Ghulam Ahmad?* (Treatise on the Ahmadiyya or Who is Ghulam Ahmad?).[47] To be sure, Muhammad Yusuf was not afraid of getting involved in controversies or polemics.

In 1922 he published two titles which would cause quite a stir with certain quarters in the Malay community in Penang: *Boria dan bencananya* (*Boria* and its Woes) and *Syair boria* (*Boria*, the Poem). Fujimoto contends that from

1917 onwards certain Muslim authorities waged a campaign to ban *boria* from public life; a campaign that was apparently successful in Kedah, where it ceased to be performed in 1920.[48] The source of this information is an article published in the *Malayan Police Magazine* in January 1935 and republished in *The Straits Times* in that same month, which also mentions 'a good deal of acrimonious correspondence in the press between those for and those against the *Boria*'.[49] This heated polemic about *boria* in the mid-1920s may well have been sparked off by Muhammad Yusuf's publications, as Fujimoto suggests.

What made Muhammad Yusuf's publications so controversial that they led to 'acrimonious correspondence'? And what was the author's bone of contention that led him to publish two booklets on it? It is clear that the author held the well-established view that Malay culture and Islamic civilisations were in a state of retrogression that could only be turned around through a series of severe reformations and efforts to obtain education. Unsurprisingly, *boria* was mentioned as one of the indications and also an underlying reason for such a downfall of the Malay community in Penang. However, Muhammad Yusuf shed a ray of hope in the introduction of his prose work by stating that the form had recently declined in popularity and quite a number of boys from well-to-do families had stopped their involvement.[50] He then traced the origins of the practice to celebrations of the supporters of Yazīd (Ḥusayn's main opponent), who feasted their victory, and possible meanings and etymologies of the word *boria*, not uncommon in other works either.

In the following description of the players and their conduct, Muhammad Yusuf sets forth his objections, which were predictably based on the disruption of everyday life and the inversion of social norms brought about by *boria*. He mentions youngsters who take up drinking, stay out all night, stay away from school and associate with gangsters, eventually becoming gang members. Another contentious bone he needs to pick is with those who squander their money, such as the rich Chinese, Europeans, Indians and even Malays who invite *boria* troupes to perform at their homes, or the people who get entangled in court cases as a result of *boria*. He also scorns the people who pretend not to have enough money to pay for their children's education, to feed their families or to give alms to beggars, yet when the *boria* season arrives they show off their affluence by generously giving to the troupes that come by. *Boria* not only induced Malay women and their children to sit outside all night long so that they were prone to being touched and grabbed by Chinese and Indian males, it even ridiculed the Arabs and their language by using God's name in vain. *Boria* confirmed European prejudices about how uncivilised Malays

were; and it generated violence and discord within the Malay community. All these objections were explained in simple and straightforward paragraphs in a 40-page booklet. Perhaps the biggest embarrassment Muhammad Yusuf had about *boria* was caused by cross-dressing and males imitating the movements and manners of ladies. Here follow a few examples from the text:

> There are people who wear woman's clothes and dance like *ronggeng* ['dancing girls'] and sway along the road clad in batik sarong and lace kebayas with bangles, necklace and *kerongsang* brooches. Praise be to God. [p. 13] [...] There are also those who have Christian women's clothes on wearing a gown, earrings, putting on false hair and stuffing rags and cotton waddings on their chests, so that they look like real women. Oh dear, they walk swaying and swinging and dance embracing each other and swerve in open spaces disgusting the people who loathe them as the gypsies are despised in Europe [...] There is also a most embarrassing and degenerated play named 'the bachelors' (i.e. whores). The males who play this all wear lace kebayas, batik sarongs, bangles, *kerongsang* brooches, necklace, and sway while walking; the musical instruments are gong, violin and drum, and they dance like *ronggeng*. Praise be to God. Think my brother, perhaps those dancers have wives and daughters, or sisters, or a daughter-in-law. So when he cross-dresses and dances like a woman out in the open in front of a mixed crowd of people amongst whom may be his wife and children, isn't he undermining his dignity and undeserving of respect [pp. 13–15] [...] and when a wife sees her husband dancing and screaming like a madman in the open her respect and fear for him will vanish; and when all fathers downgrade themselves in front of their children, can these children still respect their father? Hey, my brothers, this is the mother of all evil, and this is the play that has obliterated the Malays and has stopped the progress of the Malay people, is it appropriate to carry on with it? [p. 19][51]

Muhammad Yusuf also refuted the argument of people who claimed that *boria* represented an old tradition that could not or should not be changed by referring to the Qur'an that once brought a new religion to the Arabs and by stating that Chinese and Japanese also changed their age-old traditions. Similar to the optimism he showed in the introduction, his concluding advice (*nasihat*) was also quite optimistic about the outcome of his campaign against *boria*: 'although the kids in the neighbourhoods are wild, they are always willing to listen to advice' (p. 39). Others had been successful in stopping *boria* in Kampung Jawa and Kulim, so why would his attempts fail, for Malay children are good kids with a sense of shame (*malu*). In an attempt to further enhance his campaign he included a copy of a fatwa of three Muslim authorities who proscribed *boria* in 1920. It had been placarded in three mosques and later 500 copies were distributed.

In the *syair* published in the same year as his broadside in prose, Muhammad Yusuf seems less optimistic about the outcome of his campaign.[52] As may

be expected, the arguments in the *syair* are along similar lines to those in his prose work. Most interesting, however, are the author's comments on the reception of his earlier publication. He starts by saying that the booklet created quite some upheaval when it appeared, but the present poem is not meant to 'avenge the diabolical criticism' he received (p. 2). From the acknowledgements to his siblings who helped him distribute 1,300 copies of his prose work, which is included on the penultimate page of his *syair*, it becomes clear that his campaign was supported by the members of the Muslim Advisory Board, who issued a very gentle appeal to the people to stop the *boria* festival. But what was the reaction of the people involved?

the *boria* players became infuriated	as if they were going to war
the cowards showed how tough they were	after attacks on others it was my turn
the advisors became surprised	when they heard the news
their advice was discarded	and the flag of debauchery flew yet again[53]

They threatened the people as well and the colonial authorities stepped in to regulate *boria*, but rich people were so fond of *boria* that they opened their houses for them:

because the rich want to be entertained	the poor were left injured[54]

To save his people from further distress, Muhammad Yusuf had called in the help of sixty of his family members to sell and distribute his booklet (p. 9). But people spread rumours and defiled his name, and *boria* players mentioned his name in their songs so that his name and publications became more well-known than before. He mockingly confided that actually he should pay them for their services (p. 15). In the poem Muhammad Yusuf also reported that anonymous letter-writers were campaigning against him and he dared them to come forward with a named composition that would be printed at his expense. But if he could not manage to stop the *boria* shows and the people would not listen to him or the respected members of the Muslim Advisory Board, so be it; he already had a plan for a new publication undoubtedly also fitting in with his zeal to save the Malays from annihilation. Muhammad Yusuf did publish a few more books in the 1920s and early 1930s, but also seems to have reconciled himself to the situation that *boria* joined other popular entertainment forms, such as film, *bangsawan* and *mendu*, in touring the amusement centres of the Malay Peninsula.

Conclusion

Muḥarram processions were introduced in the Malay world by South Asian groups who had been transported there to quell an uprising, serve their sentence or work on a plantation. The carnivalesque nature of the introduced practices temporarily suspended an established hierarchy of colonial domination, inverted social norms and celebrated liberation from a prevailing truth. The practice held a certain attraction for local communities to join in this celebration but, as anywhere else in 'carnivals', it was also accompanied by many acts of individual and communal violence. Muḥarram observances were an opportunity for criminal organisations to fight their battles without causing too much alarm to the colonial authorities, who condoned to a certain extent the violence expressed during the processions. However, the conflation of different ethnic groups in the Muḥarram processions and their association with multi-ethnic organisations was a development that the British authorities could not tolerate, especially when the violence escalated and paralysed social and economic life in Penang for a period of ten days in 1867.

The observance of Muḥarram rituals and the related performance of *boria* were not only used by particular communities to unite as a whole and present themselves as opposed to the colonial elite, but also to show and accentuate differences between the communities that inhabited the urbanised areas in Penang. Similar to the construction of *taʿziya* or *tabut* by different communities to compete with each other, *boria* troupes emphasised the place, *kampung* or street they were representing. This competition in religious symbols and cultural performances was often accompanied by physical and verbal violence between the members of the neighbourhood communities in their struggle to territorial dominance.[55] Even after the riots in Penang of 1867, the colonial authorities did not proscribe *boria* as proof of their respect for the religious background of the festival. However, they did heed the complaints from elite groups in society about the violent clashes during Muḥarram and the rowdiness and cross-dressing of the *boria* troupes by issuing permit requirements for the festival.

In the 1910s to 1930s, Muslim reforming clerics spoke their minds about the heretical nature of the performing art form, which seemed to reflect a celebration of Yazīd's victory more than mourning the demise of the Prophet Muḥammad's grandson. In their view it was a relic of the past, imported from abroad, which did not live up to present-day standards. If they were still to participate in *boria* festivals, Malays would show their backwardness and open up their community to all the woes of modern society, where the Malays would

be dominated by foreign forces and sink further down in their indolence and backwardness. According to Muhammad Yusuf, burlesquing policemen, cross-dressing as *ronggeng* and impersonating whores was not the way to show the outside world that the Malay nation was moving forward on the road to progress. In their view conservative forces did not allow for the past to be forgotten in order to blur conspicuous discontinuities, or memory to be reconstructed and renewed to change performances. Eventually, however, *boria* was tamed and made into a more or less respectable performing art form by getting included within popular arts that were promoted in the amusement parks that mushroomed in urban centres throughout the Malay world from the 1930s until the 1960s. By then *boria* had been taken off the streets and put on permanent stages, and it would not be long before the form was taken up by the central government of the independent nation of Malaysia to be absorbed into its national culture as representative of Penang tradition. In the process, theatrical show and social life became safely separated, while the boundaries between playfulness and sincerity were reaffirmed and strengthened.

13

A *TA'ZIYA* FROM TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY MALAYSIA

FAISAL TEHRANI'S PASSION PLAY *KARBALA*

E. P. Wieringa

The script of the contemporary Malaysian passion play *Karbala* by maverick writer Faisal Tehrani (born on 7 August 1974 in Kuala Lumpur) piqued my interest while in a bookshop in Kuala Lumpur in March 2009.[1] The name of the author combined with the book's loaded title carried the promise of an attractive read. A prolific writer, Faisal Tehrani established a reputation early in his career as a gifted but controversial man of letters. As anonymous Wikipedia pundits rather awkwardly phrase it: 'His kind critics predict this talented writer, is a "Malaysian National Laureate" in the making. Others say his writings are Islamic extremism, anti-West and are ultra-nationalist. He denies all.'[2] For Western readers who are unfamiliar with Malaysia's literary scene, his 'unkind' critics would seem to be voicing quite disturbing concerns here. However, even if the characterisations of Faisal Tehrani's work were true, then his writing would still not be necessarily problematic from a Malaysian perspective. Contemporary Malaysian literature is generally known to propagate patriotic, ideological and religious ideas, which simply means that the usual run-of-the-mill book will emphasise the superiority of Malay Islamic culture and religion in glaring contradistinction to the 'wicked' Western world.[3]

Faisal Tehrani describes himself on his own personal website as a 'conservative pragmatist writer from Malaysia', and takes issue with the label of Islamic extremism that has been attached to him, citing himself from a 2008 interview: 'People who do not read my stuff will jump to that conclusion. Just because I write about Islam, people think I am an extremist. I feel I write more about human rights and oppression than Islam. Human rights is part of religion. (...) Extremism is an act by certain groups. It is not related to Islam at all.'[4]

Faisal Tehrani writes faster than many people read, and I cannot claim to have perused enough of his *oeuvre* to offer a general appraisal, but I was already familiar with his novel *1515*, which won a literary prize in 2002 (*Hadiah Sastra Kumpulan Utusan 2002*, in the category 'young adult literature'), and was impressed by the author's baroque phraseology, which naturally appealed to my professional interest as a philologist.[5] The narrative of *1515* is partly deliberately worded in 'classical' language with a rather profuse usage of uncommon proverbs, dialect words and archaisms, which the author in most cases helpfully explains in footnotes, obliging the readers in the target group of teenagers.

This historical novel furnishes an interesting case of contemporary literary theories in action. It wittily draws on the post-colonial 'empire writes back' theme, and is greatly indebted to *The History of the Siege of Lisbon* (original title: *História do Cerco de Lisboa*, first published in 1989) by the Nobel-laureate Portuguese author José Saramago (1922–2010).[6] It should come as no surprise that Faisal Tehrani is well-acquainted with literary studies, having earned his PhD degree in Comparative Literature at the National University of Malaysia (UKM) in 2009. The plot of *1515* could be described as a phantasmagorical alternative for 'The History of the Siege of Malacca' which, according to conventional history, fell into the hands of the Portuguese in 1511. However, in *1515* a sixteenth-century heroine called Nyemah Mulya inspires the present-day Malaysian historian Adi Fimiyun to imagine anew this most dramatic period in Malay history, but now with Malays cast in the role of winners, defeating the Portuguese infidel intruders. History is written by the winners, and in the twenty-first century, at long last, the empire strikes back, albeit in fiction.

Holding the book *Karbala* in my hands, I did not quite know what to expect. Surely not another rewriting of history, this time by the Shiʿīs? The subtitle describes it as 'A *taʿziya* drama'. *Taʿziya* (also spelled *taʾzieh, taʾzie, tazieh, tazia* and other variants) is a form of religious theatre, usually defined as a passion play, commemorating the murder of Ḥusayn, grandson of the

Prophet Muḥammad and second son of ʿAlī and Fāṭima, who was slain on the plain of Karbalā' on the 10th of the Muslim month of Muḥarram in the 61st year of the Muslim calendar (680 CE). The fundamentally opposing perceptions of this tragedy still deeply separate the Sunnī and Shiʿa branches of Islam to this day. As noted by David Cook:[7]

> [v]irtually all Muslims felt (and feel) horror at the murder of al-Ḥusayn. However, among Shiʿītes, especially the dominant Twelver Shiʿītes this horror is transformed into a type of guilt that has lasting ramifications for believers. The blood of al-Ḥusayn is such that the guilt for its shedding cannot be entirely expiated. The 10th of Muḥarram, the anniversary of his martyrdom, is a time of profound mourning and demonstrations of loyalty to al-Ḥusayn and the other Imāms that followed him.

The *taʿziya*, which revolves around the commemoration of the death of Ḥusayn as a sacred redemptive act of martyrdom, is a uniquely Shiʿī phenomenon. In Malaysia, where the vast majority of the Muslims are adherents of Sunnī Islam, the standard monolingual dictionary *Kamus Dewan* includes the word *takziah*, but there are no references to theatre.[8] We are only informed about its literal meaning, viz. 'expression of sympathy', 'condolence; mourning'; the verbal form *bertakziah* is explained as 'to grieve with; to pay a condolence call'. Using the *Kamus Dewan* as an aid to interpreting Faisal Tehrani's subtitle, a possible translation would be 'A mourning drama' (German: *Trauerspiel*).

In such a decidedly Sunnī country as Malaysia, the writing of a *taʿziya* play, which is most intimately associated with Shiʿa Islam, can be called striking and daring. The *taʿziya* genre is not only suspect from a religious, but also from a political standpoint. As the American *taʿziya* specialist William O. Beeman dryly notes, even in the Shiʿī world political officials do not like 'huge gatherings of people mourning injustice'.[9] The catchy comment used for the book promotion is quite direct, quite in-your-face, too: 'Karbalā'—a history covered up by propaganda of those in power. May it be seen at the side of the leaders of heaven.'[10] This statement has a rather strong Shiʿī resonance: are the Sunnīs not considered in Shiʿa rhetoric as the forces of injustice and illegitimate usurpers of power, whereas the Shiʿīs follow the 'Immaculate Imāms', who are hailed as the true holders of spiritual authority and the gatekeepers of heaven? However this may be, the script of the play *Karbala* was first serialised in 2007 in the literary journal *Dewan Sastera*, which is the flagship publication of the government agency Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP, Institute of Language and Literature). It subsequently appeared in book form in 2008, published by Aberdeen Books World in Putrajaya.[11] This chapter will be an

attempt to assess this particular *taʿziya*, which is aimed at a Malaysian Sunnī audience, in terms of both drama text and Faisal Tehrani's own comments as included in the 2008 *editio princeps*.

The story of the Shiʿa begins at Ghadīr Khumm

Although my contribution will deal specifically with *Karbala*, it should be known that Faisal Tehrani has meanwhile produced more work expressing ʿAlid piety, viz. another play, entitled *Kopitiam Ghadir* (Coffee Shop Ghadir), which was performed on 13–16 August 2009 in Wisma ITNM (Institut Terjemahan Negara Malaysia, the Malaysian National Institute of Translation) in Wangsa Maju, and the short story *Tunggu ana di Karbala* (Wait for Me in Karbalā'), which appeared in the journal *Mingguan Malaysia* on 3 January 2010. There was some controversy over the play *Kopitiam Ghadir*: originally, it should have been performed in August 2009 at the Stor Teater (Theatre at the Store) in the compound of the Dewan bahasa dan Pustaka (The Institute of Language and Literature, or DBP) in Kuala Lumpur.[12] The police had already issued a permit for its production, but at the end of July DBP suddenly wished to have official approval concerning the religious contents of the play. In the fallout to the incident, *Kopitiam Ghadir* was finally performed in Wisma ITNM, which in fact does not have proper theatre facilities.[13]

According to Faisal Tehrani, the central theme of *Kopitiam Ghadir* is the so-called Farewell Pilgrimage, i.e. the pilgrimage which the Prophet Muḥammad performed a few weeks before his death. In a newspaper interview Faisal Tehrani expressed his astonishment and anger that the religiosity of his play, dealing with formative Islamic history based upon *ḥadīth*s, was called into question, whereas at the same time DBP had no problems whatsoever with the performance of an 'immoral' play featuring illegitimate pregnancy and homosexuality.[14] He rhetorically asked why DBP had not consulted the Department of Islamic Development in Malaysia (*Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia* or JAKIM)—the government-run religious watchdog—for its opinion about this manifestly non-Islamic play.

The drama *Kopitiam Ghadir* is relatively short (20 pages in print), taking up one and a quarter hours in performance, and tells about a man called Ustaz Tok Malaya who is lost in a mysterious small-town place and is forced to go to a café (*kopitiam*) in order to ask for directions.[15] There he meets three men, Bakar, Umaq and Seman, who are members of a boy-band singing Islamic pop music (*nasyid*) in praise of the Prophet and his family. He informs them that

Fig. 13.1: In Kopitiam Ghadir ('Coffee shop Ghadir'), the 'Honourable Religious Teacher of the Malays' (standing) enters into a doctrinal discussion with a pious pop trio. Clad in djellaba and wearing a white skull cap, the strict theologian stands out as haji, while the weighty tomes under his arm mark him as a pillar of scripturalist Islam (from the private collection of Faisal Tehrani/Dr Haji Mohd Faizal Musa)

people call him Ustaz Tok Guru Malaya or Ustaz Tok Malaya (both meaning something like 'Honourable Religious Teacher of the Malays'), but that his name is Dr Maulana, having a PhD in *ḥadīth* criticism. He treats the three young men in the café rather arrogantly, but they are very courteous and explain to him that the area (*kampung*) is called 'Housing Estate of the Victorious *Ahl al-Bayt*' (*Taman Perumahan Ahlul Bait Jaya*). The theologian objects that this name is inappropriate as one should not 'idolise' the People of the House (*mendewa-dewakan ahlul bait*). Animated discussion ensues on the People of the House in *ḥadīth* lore (citing chapter and verse from published works), and finally the religious teacher asks himself why he is stranded in a coffee shop called Ghadir. The young men explain to him that the Prophet appointed his successor in Ghadīr Khumm, and thereupon they perform the song *Saidina Ali* (Our Lord ʿAlī), praising the latter's wisdom (including the line *Oh Ali engkaulah gerbang kota ilmu*, 'O ʿAlī, you are the door to the city of knowledge', which is a well-known *ḥadīth*).[16] The cleric protests that he has

written a PhD thesis to prove that the *ḥadīth* concerning Ghadīr Khumm is 'weak' (*dhaeif*, from Arabic *ḍaʿīf*), but to his great astonishment the pious pop trio show him, with the help of the scholar's own authoritative reference books and again citing page and *ḥadīth* number, that it is also classified as 'sound' (*sahih*, from Arabic *ṣaḥīḥ*). Finally, the 'Honourable Religious Teacher of the Malays' is shown how to get out of this little place, but the play ends with his decision to remain in the *kampung* 'Victorious People of the House'.

Faisal Tehrani relates how he found inspiration for his theatre piece while performing the pilgrimage in 2008: 'When I was in Medina, I felt that many in our population are still looking for clues and orientation. The incident of a Zionist attack on Gaza made me delve more deeply into the question of who our real leader is, namely the Messenger of God (PBUH).'[17] The play focuses upon *ḥadīth*s concerning Ghadīr Khumm ('Pond of Khumm').[18] To many Muslims, the name Ghadir of the café in the play *Kopitiam Ghadir*, which alludes to Ghadīr Khumm, will have no significance. However, as reported in *ḥadīth*s, Ghadīr Khumm was the place where the Prophet and his followers rested during the return journey to Medina, in the year 10/632, and where Muḥammad took ʿAlī by the hand, raised it before the assembly and proclaimed: 'Everyone whose patron I am, also has ʿAlī as a patron. O Allah, befriend every friend of ʿAlī and be the enemy of all his enemies; help those that aid him and abandon all who desert him.'[19] The affair of Ghadīr Khumm provides material for intense debate in the field of Sunnī–Shiʿī polemics, and hence the play *Kopitiam Ghadir* is potentially caught up in a game of political and religious brinkmanship.

Sunnī authorities commonly do not question the historicity of the event in Ghadīr Khumm, but do certainly refute the interpretation that the Prophet had intended ʿAlī to become his immediate successor.[20] ʿAlī's partisans, however, have viewed Ghadīr Khumm in a radical manner, claiming that ʿAlī should be regarded as the only legitimate and 'rightly guided' Imām. Adding considerable weight to their exegesis were the circumstances of Muḥammad delivering God's final revelation (Q 5:3) on the same day in his Farewell Sermon: 'Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion.'[21] As one Islamicist once aptly put it, 'the story of the Shiʿah begins at Ghadir Khumm'.[22]

Passionately arguing the case for the religiosity of his play, Faisal Tehrani points out in an interview that as a Muslim, an Islamic proselytiser (*seorang dhaei*) and winner of the 2006 National Arts Award (*Anugerah Seni Negara*), he felt very badly treated by DBP. He explains that he is situating *Kopitiam*

Ghadir intellectually within the discourse of canonical literature, particularly authoritative *ḥadīth* lore.[23] He seems to be suggesting that one should let historical facts speak for themselves. However, he is evading the difficulties involved in the interpretation of the episode in Ghadīr Khumm. Yet the crux of the matter lies exactly in its interpretation, as the relative degree of importance attached to the subject indicates whether a believer sides with the Sunnīs and their caliphs or with the Shiʿa and their Imāms. Here what has primacy is the contextual meaning of a text of the past: what did the Prophet imply by saying what he reportedly said in Ghadīr Khumm? Throughout the ages, up to the present day, the issue of the Prophet's intentions lying behind his statements and actions is treated scrupulously and imaginatively in Islamic scholarship.[24] However, in twenty-first-century Malaysia the official, government-sanctioned discourse on Islam is exclusivist Sunnī, which means that only the Sunnī way of seeing things is allowed.

The author and his intention

Mutatis mutandis, the same could be said of the drama at Karbalā' in 61/680, which functions as the 'founding myth' of Shiʿa Islam: its historicity is not a bone of contention among Sunnī and Shiʿī Muslims, but rather the fundamental question is whether there is a deeper significance beyond the event itself.[25] For the Shiʿīs, as Vernon James Schubert observes, these events 'are not simply historical but metahistorical. They are archetypal and in some sense stand outside of real time and are parallel to it.'[26] Hence a passion play bewailing the tribulations of ʿAlī's second son Ḥusayn and his martyred followers, written in a country poised against the Shiʿa, invites several questions. To begin with, who is this author whose name already sounds so Iranian? Literally, his name identifies him as Faisal of Tehran, but this is a *nom de plume* of a Malaysian author whose given name is Mohd Faizal Musa. He insists that the choice of his pen name does not reflect any Shiʿī leanings on his part but was merely chosen for commercial reasons: at the start of his writing career, when he still had difficulty attracting attention from publishers, a foreign-sounding name assured that editors would take notice.[27] By now, he is so successful that his pseudonym has become a trademark or a brand name.

The book *Karbala* features two interviews with Faisal Tehrani, both conducted with him in 2007 (slightly edited for this publication), and it is noteworthy that he is most evasive on questions pertaining to any personal involvement with the Shiʿa. In his opinion, Sunnī Muslims should not divide

the world into Islam and non-Islam but into 'oppressed' and 'oppressors'.[28] Calling himself a human rights activist, he positions himself on the side of the oppressed.[29] As I see it, Faisal Tehrani is a master of the double entendre, by which his phrases can be understood in both a Sunnī and Shiʿī way. If we take the example about his objection to the labels Sunnī and Shiʿa, we encounter a variant of the 'God is one, Islam is one' refrain, mostly to the effect that there are only Muslims and infidels (*kuffār*).[30] This familiar argument is not specifically Sunnī or Shiʿī, but Faisal Tehrani adds a political and social justice dimension to it which makes it sound rather Shiʿī in tone. The dichotomised worldview of oppressors and oppressed is curiously reminiscent of late-twentieth-century Iranian Shiʿī rhetoric, in which humanity is bipolarly divided into the 'members of the tribe of God' and the 'tribe of *ṭāghūt*'.[31] The meaning of the latter term differs from the Qur'anic meaning of 'idol', i.e. something worshipped other than God, and must be understood as denoting oppressive governments and their infidel allies.[32] The 'tribe of *ṭāghūt*' is presented as the evil force which imposes oppression.[33]

The Iranian–American scholar Hamid Dabashi has called Shiʿa 'a religion of protest', with a 'theology of discontent' or an 'Islamic liberation theology'.[34] Discussing *taʿziya* as theatre of protest, Dabashi points to the notion of *maḍlūmiyyat* as its central thematic which, in his opinion, is the defining aspect of Shiʿa itself. *Maḍlūmiyyat* 'constitutes the moral/political community in terms of justice and its aberration. *Maḍlūmiyyat* is the absence of justice that signals the necessity of its presence.'[35] The base word *maḍlūm* literally means 'someone who has been wronged, someone who has been subjected to a grave injustice'.[36] The archetypal model of a *maḍlūm* is, of course, Ḥusayn, who for the Shiʿī epitomises the ultimate moral exemplar, safeguarding true Islam and fighting against oppression and tyranny. Shiʿīs regard his martyrdom at Karbalāʾ as the greatest victory of good over evil, right over wrong and truth over falsehood.[37] As the famous slogan goes: 'Every day is ʿĀshūrā, every land is Karbalā'.'

So on the one hand, Faisal Tehrani's remarks would seem to adhere to the Karbalāʾ paradigm; but on the other hand, such an interpretation is in the eye of the beholder. To describe oneself, as Faisal Tehrani does, as a human rights activist who is on the side of the oppressed cannot give offence to anyone and does not lead to problems with the authorities. The interviewers do not press the issue, but nevertheless their questions are straightforward enough. For example, the editor of *Dewan Sastera*, Rozninah Abdul Azib, confronts him with the view of many readers of his work, who feel that it is suffused with a

Shiʿa spirit, and she asks: 'Is this accusation correct?'[38] This is a simple yes or no question, but again Faisal Tehrani avoids giving a direct answer.

His act of rhetorical bravado employs several debating tricks that shift the focus from the original question about writing Shiʿī propaganda to the bigger question of respectability, both for the author and Shiʿa. Against those who dare criticise him, Faisal Tehrani retorts that people tend to judge easily, but in fact don't read and don't know: the allegations hurled at him are being skewed by prejudice and ignorance.[39] Another line of counter-attack is his response that ideas need to be freely discussed and not forbidden. Here Faisal Tehrani utilises the Nazi trump card or the *Reductio ad Hitlerum*: 'Historically, the Nazis and Hitler tried to forbid ideas, and they failed.'[40] What is wrong with Shiʿism anyway? Employing an *argumentum ad numerum* approach, Faisal Tehrani asks how Shiʿism can be accused of deviating from the 'norm' when it is, in fact, the most successful doctrine in the Islamic world, having hundred of thousands of mosques, thousands of theologians, hundred of thousands of theological books and hundreds of millions of followers. How can you consider hundreds of millions of Shiʿīs as infidels? Shiʿism, as he concludes, is part of the Islamic community (*umat Islam*).[41]

In the other interview, which first appeared in the magazine *Millinia Muslim*, when the journalist Maizura Mohd Ederis asked Faisal Tehrani to comment on why he was seen as such a staunch defender of Shiʿism, he once more denied this allegation. In his opinion lay people are unable to discuss whether the Shiʿa or Sunnī side is right: 'The one, who is right is the *Rasul Allah* (PBUH), he is the Messenger of God. When someone is obedient to our Prophet, this person will find the truth.'[42] The interviewer just left it at that, but again one may notice that Faisal Tehrani's rebuttal is not only indirect and abstract but also rather puzzling for raising the subject of obedience to the Prophet. This statement is ambiguous and open to opposing interpretations: on the one hand, it could be interpreted as pro-Sunnī, because Sunnī Muslims like to define themselves as those who adhere to the *sunna* ('trodden path') of the Prophet Muḥammad himself; on the other hand, the idea of unquestioning obedience and devotion to Muḥammad also happens to be a key doctrine in Shiʿī Islam, but with the corollary claim that this principle extends to the Imāms, as they carry on the sacred Prophetic bloodline. Faisal Tehrani reserves for himself the right to address religious issues on the grounds of his academic theological education.[43] He presents himself as a theologian who wants to propagate the faith by his pen.[44]

Rozninah Abdul Azib directly asks Faisal Tehrani about the authorial intention: 'What are you in fact trying to convey in this drama?'[45] Of course,

in this particular case, using the word 'proselytising' is somewhat taboo because attempting to persuade Sunnīs to convert to Shiʿism is strictly forbidden in Malaysia, and Faisal Tehrani makes use of a well-known *topos*, so familiar in academia, that a topic has been neglected. He argues that hitherto, Malaysian scholars in the field of theatre studies have studied all kinds of theatre from all over the world, never minding their non- or even anti-Islamic character, and he rhetorically asks: 'If our Muslim scholars can accept all these kinds of drama, which deny God, which have Buddhist elements, which have Hindu features, which have Christian flavours, well then, please show me now what is wrong with *taʿziya* drama?'[46] His play provides material for Malaysian theatregoers and students and he remarks: 'I think it would only be right to receive thanks and not scolding.'[47] This argument in defence of *Karbala* would seem to stress the cultural rather than the religio-political aspects of the play, thereby strategically situating this theatre piece under the rubric of 'culture' as opposed to 'religion'. Acts and utterances, which are placed in the general realm of 'culture', 'art' or 'custom', and thus outside the sensitive framework of 'religion', will find a more receptive public mindset.[48]

Perhaps in an effort to downplay the Shiʿa character of the *taʿziya* drama further, Faisal Tehrani emphasises that love for the family of the Prophet is at the very heart of it:[49]

> The *taʿziya* drama tells about the murder of the Prophet's grandson in Karbala at Ashura day. The noble grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) belongs to us all, regardless whether Sunni or Shiʿa, and no community can accept this atrocity and this war crime, the slaughtering of the Prophet's grandson is something which is unimaginable. This tragedy is the basis of the *taʿziya* drama.

Faisal Tehrani also mentions that in preparing his *taʿziya* drama, he has done much research, and has studied many works on the drama of Karbalā'. 'And among the many books there were two reference works, which have been published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka itself': *Peristiwa di Padang Karbala* ('The Incident at the Plain of Karbalā') by Wan Yusof Hassan; and a Malay translation of the Arabic work *al-Fitna al-kubrā* (The Great Discord) by the famed Egyptian historian and literary writer Taha Husayn (d.1973).[50] This makes it seem as if the publication of his own *taʿziya* drama in the literary journal *Dewan Sastera* by DBP is nothing out of the ordinary.

The plight of Shiʿī Muslims in Malaysia

Faisal Tehrani's heedful answers to inquiries about his personal involvement with Shiʿa Islam become readily understandable when one considers his coun-

try's official government policy toward Islamic matters. As anyone following the news coverage on Malaysia may know, the Malaysian government sees it as its task to defend Sunnī orthodoxy. Recently, 'Allah-gate' hit the headlines. On 31 December 2009, a high court ruling overturned a government order that banned non-Muslims from using the word 'Allah'. Nevertheless, in January 2010, the government continued to restrict the usage of the word 'Allah' exclusively for Muslims on the grounds of national security, and to avoid misunderstanding and confusion among Muslims.

The government-run Department of Islamic Development in Malaysia (JAKIM) is responsible for enforcing Islamic law on the Muslim population. JAKIM also carries out rulings issued by the National Fatwa Council. As the journalist Niluksi Koswanage reports:[51]

> In recent months the council has asked Muslims to stay away from yoga because of its Hindu origins, and forbidden women from wearing trousers. Although edicts are not legally binding, they are very influential in Malaysia. Working as a moral police, JAKIM officers patrol parks looking for unwed couples holding hands, raid nightclubs to catch Muslims drinking alcohol, stake out betting shops and fine Muslims who eat in public during the fasting month of Ramadan. In 2006, Islamic officials mistakenly raided the apartment of a married American couple, both Christians, on suspicion of *khalwat*, or the Islamic crime of close proximity between unmarried couples. The government later apologised.

JAKIM enforces faith (*akidah*) conceptualised along the lines of 'the People of the Custom and Community'.[52] The latter expression is the conventional title by which Sunnī Muslims like to identify themselves, and is particularly directed against the Shiʿīs, who are accused of deviating from 'orthodox' doctrine and practice. Shiʿa Islam is forbidden in Malaysia, and its followers have been detained under the so-called Internal Security Act (ISA) in the past.[53] ISA, which was originally introduced in 1960 to fight an anti-colonial communist-led insurgency, permits indefinite detention without trial and is a most effective law to 'silence those considered "deviant" or "subversive" by the government'.[54] JAKIM has published an informative booklet on Shiʿism (2001), which is also available online at the official government website.[55] It contains a strong government warning against Shiʿism:[56]

> The goal of this book is to provide information and explanation to the general public on Shiʿa views, so that Muslims and society stay away from these teachings and are not influenced by them, and to convince those who are involved that the guidelines of their views are in conflict with genuine Islamic teachings.

In this publication the number of Shiʿīs in Malaysia is estimated between 300 and 500 people, but Shiʿism is deemed to be a 'dangerous sect'. Appar-

ently, the Malaysian government is not only concerned for the spiritual welfare of its Muslim citizens but is also worried about possible Shiʿī threats to national security. The conclusion is well worth quoting in full:[57]

> The Southeast Asian area, especially Malaysia, is a quiet area following the guidelines of the People of the Custom and Community. Any attempt to introduce a non-Sunni view, especially Shiʿa views, to the people of this area will certainly upset societal harmony. Countries, which have Shiʿa adherents, have experienced public and governmental instability.[58] Shiʿīs will always try to increase their hold on Sunnis, and influence them. They do not want to surrender to a Sunni government and administration. The National Fatwa Council, in its session of 3 May 1996, has taken the following decision: 'It is decreed that the Muslim community in Malaysia should only follow Islamic teachings, as concerns doctrine, law, and ethics, which are based upon the guidelines of the People of the Custom and Community. It is certified that Islamic teachings, which are different from those of the People of the Custom and Community, are in conflict with Islamic Canon Law and Islamic Regulations; therefore the propagation of any non-Sunni teachings is forbidden.

Against this backdrop, showing a Shiʿa affiliation is not without risks in Malaysia. On account of his literary work, and also because of his comments on topical issues posted on his blogs (tehranifaisal.blogspot.com and peduli-palestina.blogspot.com), Faisal Tehrani is regularly accused by other Malaysian bloggers of being a closet Shiʿa.[59] Some bloggers call for his detention under the Internal Security Act (ISA), and one ill-wisher commented: 'Please remember that in the case of an apostate, we should first put him in quarantine (ISA) before sentencing him to death. Someone like Faisal Tehrani should surely be detained under ISA.'[60] In 2008, the *mufti* of Perlis, Dr Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin, wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper *Metro*, in which he accused Faisal Tehrani of being someone of Shiʿa persuasion who used his creative work in order to disseminate Shiʿa thoughts.[61] Duplicates were sent to the director general of JAKIM and the director general of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Horizons of expectation

Karbala is a three-act play, and each act presents different episodes from the Karbalā' story which can be played separately.[62] For example, Act One (pp. 3–29) ends with the dramatic death scene of Ḥusayn, but in Act Two (pp. 31–80) we are back again in Ḥusayn's lifetime, as this part starts with a conversation between Ḥusayn and general Hurr bin Yazid (al-Ḥurr b. Yazīd), who in this episode is still on the enemy side. Act Two also ends with the

murder of Ḥusayn, but this time highlighting the despicable role of Syimir bin Dzil Jausyan (Shamir b. Dhi ʾl-Jawshan). Finally, Act Three (pp. 81–109) begins with a favourite topic in Shiʿī narratives of Karbalā': the arrival of Hurr bin Yazid in Ḥusayn's camp, having decided to attain martyrdom on Ḥusayn's side. The well-known pun on Hurr's name, meaning 'freeborn', is not missing here.[63] As Ḥusayn points out: 'Congratulations, Hurr. Now you are "hur" or free, in accordance with the name which your mother gave you. You are "hur" in this world and in the next.'[64] This last Act ends with a furious speech by Zaynab al-Kubra (Ḥusayn's sister) given after the slaughter when the remaining followers of Ḥusayn have been brought as captives to Kūfa.

Hitherto, only small fragments from *Karbala* have been played for select audiences, and it has never been performed in its entirety on stage. However, if it were to be staged, what could a spectator expect? In Iranian theatre, the performance of *taʿziya* can be astoundingly realistic with actors moving about on horses or even camels. Conversely, Faisal Tehrani's play has little action on offer, consisting of rather long sermonising monologues. A relatively large role is given to two commentators, 'Narrator 1' (*tukang cerita 1*) and 'Narrator 2' (*tukang cerita 2*) who relate what is happening, thus elucidating the events to the spectators. Faisal Tehrani has stipulated that there should be at least thirty actors: ten will belong to the 'group of the devout' (*kelompok orang saleh*) and twenty to the antagonistic 'group of the godless' (*kelompok orang fasik*). The devout wear white and green clothes and yellow shoes, whereas the godless characters are completely dressed in red or brown.[65] The author does not explain this direction, but *taʿziya* aficionados may know that the colours have symbolic meaning in accordance with genre conventions: green is the colour of Islam and paradise, and white is the colour of innocence and the funeral shroud, while yellow stands for death.[66] The Umayyad side conventionally wears red clothes, the colour of blood shed by assassins. Hurr bin Yazid is the only person who shifts allegiance, and this is symbolically marked in one episode by a change of clothes when he dons white and green clothing.[67] In order to lend a bit of *couleur locale* to his play, Faisal Tehrani suggests using Malay-style dress (*baju Melayu*).[68] As in Iranian *taʿziya* theatre, male actors play all the parts. In contrast to Iranian productions, however, Faisal Tehrani's adaptation does not involve such animals as horses, camels and sheep, but in accordance with Iranian conventions the action is accompanied by a traditional musical ensemble consisting of trumpets and drums.[69]

Of course, every spectator will come to the theatre with certain preconceptions, which the German literary theorist Hans Robert Jauss called the 'hori-

zon of expectations' (*Erwartungshorizont*). As Robert Leach explains in his introduction to theatre studies:[70]

> There are, however, two kinds of horizons of expectation for the theatregoer. Plays are evaluated against productions of other plays, and perhaps against other productions of the same play; they are also evaluated against the spectator's own personal and social experience. If either of these horizons is exceeded, the spectator is delighted—so long as it is not exceeded by too much, at which point the play begins to become obscure, even indecipherable.

However, in the case of *Karbala*, the Malay audience is confronted by a play operating within unfamiliar Iranian codes which are not instantly understood, and will certainly be met with bafflement. Secondly, the Shiʿī contents run counter to the audience's Sunnī worldview. *Taʿziya* is a form of religious ritual theatre, and there will be no applause during or after the show. Normally, *taʿziya* is played before an audience which forms an 'emotional community' (or in Weberian terms, *Gemeinde*).[71] In Iran, the spectators of the tragic scenes would be emotionally affected by the performance and would be participating in the drama through weeping, chanting and breast-beating, becoming 'participant mourners'.[72] The classic formulation is: 'To weep, or to cause others to weep, or to *pretend* to weep for Imam Hossein, will bring you reward in heaven.'[73] In the Malaysian context, however, the interrelationship between spectators and actors will tend to be aloof and detached rather than intimate.

The play's obscurity for Malay spectators is further heightened, I think, because the actors do not have specific roles. As Andrzej Wirth has remarked of this typical *taʿziya* convention: 'The Ta'ziyeh art of acting makes the performer-believer a role carrier *Rollenträger*, not a character.'[74] This implies in Faisal Tehrani's play that when, for example, the Narrator announces an episode featuring Umar bin Sa'ad ('Umar b. Sa'd) and Imām Ḥusayn, one member of the godless group and one member of the devout group will step forward and play the respective role. Faisal Tehrani writes that he has deliberately opted for this style because it helps to prevent actors being associated with certain roles, whether holy or evil.[75] This distancing procedure between the actor and the role is a characteristic and oft-commented feature of *taʿziya* theatre:

> Since both the actors and audience are aware of the events of *Karbela*, and are united in their condemnation, there is no illusion, suspense, or dramatic tension. The actors of Taziyeh on both sides, of sacred and evil characters, do not believe that they are playing the role of individuals involved within the tragedy of Karbela: rather, they believe they are narrators who make a massive effort towards creating and then transferring the mood and feeling of the actual events of the day of Ashura to their audience.[76]

No Shiʿī actor would dare 'to become one' with Ḥusayn, which would amount to blasphemy, while his revulsion for the monstrous villains also quenches any desire to identify with any of the evil characters.[77]

However, it is doubtful whether all Malay spectators will be able to immediately identify the different roles in a performance on stage. For example, in a dialogue between Ḥusayn and Ummu Kalsum (Umm Kulthūm), it may take some time to realise that the (male) actor playing Ummu Kalsum is Ḥusayn's sister. The stage direction introduces this character as follows: 'A man from the group of the devout moves forward, and although he plays the character of Ummu Kalsum, this actor does not have to act like a woman. It would be better if this character would be played by a child actor.'[78] Ḥusayn addresses this character as *adikku* (literally 'my younger sibling', a gender-neutral word), but without once mentioning her name, and tells her about a foreboding dream of their father ʿAlī. Only when Narrator 1 comments 'That's right, Kalsum, that dream of the Imām ʿAlī is terrifying' (*Benar Kalsum, mimpi imam Ali itu mimpi yang menyeramkan*) does the spectator have certainty about the identity of this person.[79] In another episode, this time about Ḥusayn and Abbas (al-ʿAbbās), we read the following stage direction: 'The Imām looks at his younger brother, Abbās, and someone from the group of the devout steps forward, "becoming" Abbās.'[80] However, as there are no clear hints, only *taʿziya* connoisseurs would be able to identify this actor as Abbās. In the ensuing dialogue between Ḥusayn and Abbās, the latter's name is not once mentioned.

The script often gives information to the reader, which is not available to the audience in the theatre. For example: 'The lights dim, signifying the onset of night, the choir keeps lamenting, the devout group is making a construction with cardboard boxes, which looks like a fortification around them.'[81] The attentive spectator may have remembered that in an earlier episode the same boxes also functioned as a military encampment.[82] Again, Faisal Tehrani remains close to original *taʿziya* conventions, as stage décor should be minimal in order to evoke the desolate character of the Karbalā' plain, and the few props are symbolic as well.[83] After this stage direction about the cardboard boxes, the reader is introduced to Ali Zainal Abidin (d.713) (ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, the fourth imām of the Twelver Shiʿa): 'he is a son of Imām Husein, the only descendant of God's Messenger who was not killed at Karbala, because he happened to be ill and was saved by his aunt Zainab'.[84] However, the only clue for the spectator about Ali Zaynal Abidin's identity is in his speech: 'That night I was ill' (*Malam itu aku sedang menderita sakit*).[85] *Taʿziya* enthusiasts will know that the speaker must be ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, being the only male survivor of Karbalā', as he had been too ill to fight.

Quite a few stage directions are such that I wondered how the director and the actors would manage to achieve the effects that the writer had in mind. Some examples may suffice:

- The martyrdom of Ibnu Ausajah (aka Muslim bin Ausajah or Muslim b. ʿAwsaja). After the dramatic statement, 'I am fully prepared to become a martyr, mother', the stage direction is: 'The young man fights with a soldier from the godless group, he is sacrificed and his head is thrown to his mother' (p. 19).
- About Imām Ḥusayn: 'He realizes that nobody is there, utterly alone he will have to confront the enemy' (p. 25).
- 'The group of the godless throws sticks at Hurr bin Yazid. Hurr falls down, some members of the pious group carry Hurr on the shoulders to Imām Ḥusayn' (p. 89).
- Vocal technique: 'Zaynab speaks so fervently that the hair of anyone who hears her will stand on end' (p. 101).

Much depends on acting skills. For example, at the end of Act One there is a great death scene, which could easily have an inadvertently comical effect—that is to say, for a non-Shiʿī public, of course. Imām Ḥusayn is smearing blood on his face and body and says: 'Like this I will meet my grandfather Muhammad (may God's peace and blessings be upon him). I will tell him that those who killed me were these misters so-and-so, the sons of misters so-and-so.'[86] Immediately after these words Ḥusayn drops dead, and the choir 'sweetly weeps', accompanied by sorrowful music. Undoubtedly the scene is meant to be highly dramatic, but a bad actor may cause the audience to think of a crying little boy who, facing the archetypal schoolyard bullies, cannot come up with a more serious threat than 'I'll tell Daddy on you'.

Looking at the broader issue of intercultural performance, presenting a play originating from another cultural background is always fraught with problems. When the Royal Shakespeare Company director Peter Brook adapted the great ancient Indian epic *Mahabharata* for stage, some critics hailed him as the 'creator of the twentieth-century theatre's most spectacular achievement'.[87] Others, however, held him guilty of cultural imperialism, 'stealing the cultural "property" of the developing world for his own (Western) ends, ripping the epic from its context, and losing the underpinning Hindu social understanding and cosmology'.[88] Commenting upon an Indian Shiʿī performance in Chicago, the American Islamicist David Pinault criticises that it failed as 'an educational attempt, as a bridge-building experiment in commu-

nication'.[89] American non-Shiʿī spectators simply failed to grasp its sense, and the performance was merely 'an instance of communal self-assertion'.[90] Pinault's rather harsh verdict is that it was an example of an 'infelicitous performance', being experienced by the audience as meaningless because its acts were unrecognisable or uninterpretable.[91]

Critics of Brook's production are unhappy with the act of adapting, complaining that by putting the *Mahabharata* in another context, he had changed its meaning. Conversely, Pinault laments that the Indian 'Ashūrā' performance in Chicago had the 'familiar trappings' he knew from South Asia, but in the USA it was literally 'out of place', and the uninformed onlookers had no idea what was going on.

Meanwhile, *taʿziya* has been quite successful in the West: France was the first non-Shiʿī country in which *taʿziya* was performed, at the 1991 Festival of Arts in Avignon, but it has now also been performed at art festivals in Paris, Parma, Rome and New York. However, it should be noted that a wealth of public education surrounded these productions in order to provide the audience members with background information.[92]

Keeping close to the original template of Iranian *taʿziya* theatre, Faisal Tehrani's adaptation makes no concessions to a non-Shiʿī audience. Doubtless a non-Shiʿī theatregoer will experience *Karbala* as unusual and at times even obscure to the point of incomprehensibility, but a sanitised version would have robbed the passion play of its meaning: *taʿziya*, as re-enactment of the martyrdom of Ḥusayn at Karbalā', is one of the most striking signifiers of Shiʿī Islam. The Karbalā' story is at the heart of Shiʿa spiritual life. As Gustav Thaiss observes, here we touch upon the topic of 'ownership' of intellectual property: to whom does the Karbalā' story 'belong'?[93] Does it belong to the Shiʿa only? Carnivalesque adaptations of the Muḥarram celebrations in such non-Shiʿī places as Malaysia, Indonesia and Trinidad show that the Karbalā' story has found appeal beyond Shiʿism, but also prove that entertainment value and religious beliefs do not mix easily.[94]

A Shiʿa drama

However, the play *Karbala* is not just for Ḥusayn devotees, it also displays a deep devotion for the Prophet Muḥammad and his family, 'the People of the House' (*ahl al-bayt*). The love for the Prophet and his family, which is common among Shiʿīs and Sunnīs alike, is so great in Islam that it has baffled many non-believers. It should be emphasised that the exalted status of the Prophet

and the *ahl al-bayt* in Islamic piety is not the exclusive reserve of Shiʿa Islam. For example, in the songs used in religious schools of the traditionalist Sunnī organisation Nahdhatul Ulama in Indonesia, the *ahl al-bayt* feature no less as exemplary role models. Though scholars like to point to the importance of Fāṭima as a symbol of the Holy Family in Shiʿa Islam,[95] religious teachers of Nahdhatul Ulama likewise offer the idealised pious maternal figure of Fāṭima as guide for girls and women to imitate.[96]

In principle, a shared commitment or common ground could facilitate interfaith dialogue. However, in Faisal Tehrani's play the tone is distinctly Shiʿī, and there are no conciliatory gestures towards the intended Sunnī public. As Vernon James Schubel astutely remarks, love and devotion for the Prophet and the *ahl al-bayt* is both 'a wall and a bridge' between Shiʿīs and Sunnīs.[97] This becomes immediately clear from the beginning of Act One, in the relatively long introduction (pp. 3–7) by Narrator 1. After a recitation of blessings by the choir, Narrator 1 begins with the *basmala*, continuing with a recitation of blessings over the Prophet, followed by blessings invoked upon Ḥusayn, praising his august role for humankind:[98]

> Peace upon you, o Aba [*sic*] ʿAbdillah.[99]
> Peace upon you, o Lord of Martyrs.
> Peace upon you, o Ḥusayn, son of ʿAlī, and God's mercy and blessings.
> Peace upon you, o Great Fighter of *Karbalā'*.
> Peace upon you, o Glorious Islamic Hero.
> Peace upon you, o Torch upon Mankind's Path.
> May God turn us into people who may follow in your footsteps. And who may receive your future intercession (*syafaat*) thanks to your guardianship (*wilayah*).

The latter sentence contains two key terms, which both indicate deep doctrinal differences between the Shiʿa and Sunnī forms of Islam. The word *wilāya* ('guardianship', 'authority', 'lordship') is used here in its Shiʿī meaning denoting the leadership of the (twelve infallible) imāms.[100] However, the common Malay usage of the word *wilayah* is 'area, domain, territory, province, sphere', and I am not sure whether all theatregoers may understand this theological expression.[101] Of course, the word *shafāʿa* ('intercession') is familiar enough to a Malaysian audience, but Sunnī Muslims believe that intercession for sinners on the Day of Judgement is the unique prerogative of the Prophet Muḥammad and not of any other members of his household.[102] The question of intercession and the controversies surrounding this doctrine is a staple in Sunnī–Shiʿa polemics, and the inclusion of both 'guardianship' and 'intercession', both of which are hotly debated contentious terms, makes it clear that the play is not exactly ecumenical, attempting to create a rapprochement with Sunnīs.

After this rather formal opening, Narrator 1 directly addresses his public by making an appeal to the emotions. The spectators should imagine being in Medina, in the humble house of the Prophet Muḥammad: 'Let us imagine being in one room together with the Prophet, whom we all love so much, in a small room.'[103] Evoking the great love of the Prophet for his two grandsons, Narrator 1 poses some uncomfortable questions: 'Sirs (in a sadder voice), how can we let the Prophet cry, Sirs? What kind of community are we part of that we let the Prophet cry and sob? Does nobody feel affected?'[104] This leitmotif, reiterated continuously, is: 'What kind of community are we?' (*umat macam apakah kita ini?*) This refrain also functions as the last sentence of the play, as the closing line of the speech by Zainab al-Kubra to the treacherous people of Kūfa: 'Hey, what kind of community are you?!'[105] This accusatory question is directed at non-Shiʿa Muslims, who on the one hand profess a deep love for the Prophet Muḥammad, but on the other hand show themselves indifferent, if not hostile, toward the Prophet's family.

The suggestion is even made that by killing members of the *ahl al-bayt*, (Sunnī) Muslims have killed Muḥammad, their own Prophet. A few examples may suffice. Narrator 1 comments the tragic events surrounding the killing of Ḥusayn's son Ali Akbar (ʿAlī al-Akbar) with a wailing voice, rebuking his co-religionists:[106]

> Oh, what kind of community are we? Why do we let it happen that the great-grandchild of the Prophet enters the battlefield? Don't you know that this smart youngster is Husayn's son? Oh, how can we be willing and determined to let this boy put his life at stake? Doesn't this young boy's face look similar to that of his great-grandparent? If someone longs to see the face of the Messenger of God, he should look at the face of Ali Akbar. How can a person be capable of slashing Ali Akbar, and not feeling fear? Aren't they afraid of God's punishment? What kind of community would be able to kill the great-grandchild of the Prophet? What kind of community are you all to let his stomach be poured out, crushed by God's enemies?

Narrator 1 describes the event as an attempted assassination of the Prophet Muḥammad: 'Sharp swords cut Ali Akbar's face into pieces, which radiates the light of Muhammad (PBUH).'[107] In his dying moments ʿAbbas bin ʿAlī, Ḥusayn's half-brother, asks God for forgiveness as he has not been able to fetch water for Fāṭima's daughters. Thereupon the choir sings: 'What kind of community are you all? Aren't you ashamed to come in throngs to the grave of the Messenger of God in the Prophet's Mosque, whereas you turn away from his grandchild, who is slaughtered like this?'[108] The asides to the public have an accusatory tone, too. In Act Three the choir sings:[109]

> Oh, how sad is the family of the Prophet, how lonely is the lament of Fatima's son, utterly isolated is the son of the Luminous, [but] on this day when the Prophet's descendant is suffering from thirst and is crying loudly, you don't care. You say, what's the use of resuscitating an old story. Oh, how rude. This old story is a story about the sacrifice of the Prophet's family, why do you not want to know about it?

The author is aware that his public has little knowledge of the tragedy. In the words of Narrator 2 in Act Three: 'The tragedy in Karbala is indeed rather unknown in our circles. (...) Sirs, Karbala is a history, which has been lost in our area.'[110]

The twentieth century has seen the most large-scale atrocities in the history of mankind, claiming millions of innocent victims; hence the pronouncement of Narrator 2 may sound preposterous to a non-Shiʿa spectator: 'Oh Karbala, you will witness the most tragic bloodshed in the whole of human history.'[111] However, the belief that Ḥusayn's sacrifice of himself will bring eternal salvation to the rest of the community belongs to the Shiʿa creed, and so his martyrdom is seen as a cosmic event. Narrator 2 explains that Ḥusayn's fight was not motivated by personal interests, but was a fight for 'truth' (*kebenaran*).[112] It is therefore tempting to read the play's dedication, 'For those who search the truth' (*Kepada mereka yang mencari kebenaran*) against the background of Ḥusayn's association with 'truth' which is constantly on his tongue.

Demons and saints

In *taʿziya* theatre, the battle lines are most clearly drawn between good and evil.[113] As noted by many critics, this black-and-white bipolarity is so radical that even the villains openly admit that they are only motivated by worldly gains, whereas truth and justice are on the side of Ḥusayn.[114] Spectators who are not familiar with *taʿziya* rules and regulations may deplore its lack of realism.[115] However, an Iranian audience:

> knows the story perfectly, and this situation obviates the need for any exposition of character development in the plays. There is no need for the author of the Ta'ziyeh to supply any significant details about the background of the action, the setting, or the personality of the characters. The evil characters know that they are evil and often say so, while the good characters all know in advance the outcome of their actions, and often refer to this. Thus, in the core plays of the Taʿziyeh, much time can be spent on such emotional scenes as tearful leave-takings and lamentations.[116]

Faisal Tehrani adheres closely to Iranian *taʿziya* conventions, and so we find that when the villain ʿUmar b. Saʾad orders the arrest of Ḥusayn, he is respect-

fully alluding to the majesty of ʿAlī as 'Lion of God': 'Encircle this son of the Arab Lion. This is the son of Ali b. Abi Thalib.'[117] 'Umar b. Saʾad fully knows that he is evil, and with an 'arrogant voice' (*bersuara angkuh*) he says: 'I am convinced that anyone will go to hell if he fights and kills Ḥusayn and his followers.'[118] Although Ḥusayn still tries to convince him that it would be better to choose the Imām's side, because this would bring him closer to God, 'Umar b. Saʾad finds the governorship of the city of Rayy much more alluring, upon which Ḥusayn curses him: 'God will destroy you in your bed. I hope you will not have the opportunity to eat wheat, not even a little bit.'[119] 'Umar b. Saʾad's reaction is one of complete indifference: '(in a mocking tone) Even if I cannot eat a grain of wheat, the available barley (*barli*) will already be enough for me.'[120] Even Syimir bin Dzil Jausyan (Shimr b. Dhiʾl-Jawshan), who will ultimately kill Ḥusayn, addresses the Imām in most respectful language: 'By God, I will separate your head from your body, even though I know that you are the most excellent man because of your grandfather, your father and your mother.'[121] When Ḥusayn asks him if he knows to whom he is talking, Syimir bin Dzil Jausyan mentions Ḥusayn's family background with all due honorific epithets: 'Of course, I know you. Your father is ʿAlī, he with whom God is pleased, your mother is Fāṭima the Luminous, your grandfather Muḥammad the Chosen One, and your grandmother Khadīja the Great.'[122]

The demonisation of Ḥusayn's arch-enemy Yazīd is in accordance with *taʿziya* conventions, but also with general Islamic and Malay taboos: he is accused of drinking wine and being openly drunk, which categorises him as 'the Other'.[123] John Renard, in his pioneering studies on pan-Islamic images of saints and heroes 'from Morocco to Malaysia', searches for common Islamic constants, but I think that in some cases regional cultural differences may be of overriding importance.[124] The way in which the Prophet's family is portrayed in Faisal Tehrani's *taʿziya* is rather paradoxical: on the one hand, the *ahl al-bayt* are 'holier than thou', but on the other hand they also appear as 'human, all too human'. Both extreme aspects may be off-putting to a Sunnī Malay audience. Theologically, a Sunnī Malay believer cannot accept the imāmate of the *ahl al-bayt*. Culturally, in their role as ranting and raving persons, the *ahl al-bayt* fit into the negative stereotype of the aggressive Arab who always feels wronged. As observed by Michael Gilsenan, 'Arabs' in popular imagery throughout maritime Southeast Asia 'are the channels of Islam, pious, upright, representing learning' and a pure, 'unmixed' religion, but in another field of reference 'Arabs' are 'voracious, lustful, hard, greedy and rough'.[125]

The lofty status of the *ahl al-bayt* is constantly repeated in *Karbala*. For example, Ḥusayn declares that not solely the Prophet Muḥammad received

the divine message, but rather the Prophet's family as a whole: 'We are the family of the Prophet. It is us, who received the Message. Our house became the common meeting place for angels and the centre of God's mercy. It is because of us that God begins and ends everything.'[126] In another episode (in Act Three) Ḥusayn proclaims:[127]

> I am the son of ʿAlī, from the tribe of the Hashemites (...). Fāṭima is my mother, and Muḥammad is my grandfather. It is through our intermediary that God demonstrates what is right and what is wrong. We are God's lamps which cast light on the face of this earth.[128] We are the owners of the pool al-Kawthar,[129] which will give [water] to drink to our devotees, with cups and vessels of the Messenger. Not a single person can deny our position. Our followers belong to the most excellent community among all creatures, and our enemies are the people who most suffer on the Last Day.

At the beginning of Act Two, Imām Ḥusayn addresses Hurr bin Yazid, telling the latter that he has arrived by invitation of the Kūfans. As a member of the Prophet's family, he considers himself as the rightful leader. He threatens to leave if the Kūfans do not acknowledge his right to rulership. After Ḥusayn's rather long oration (taking up a complete page in the script), the deadpan reaction from al-Ḥurr b. Yazīd may be considered funny by a non-Shiʿa public: 'I don't know anything about the letters that you're talking about.'[130] After having been shown the letters of invitation, al-Ḥurr b. Yazīd declares: 'I don't belong to those who have sent these letters. I've been ordered to track your group, and command you to surrender to ʿUbayd Allāh bin Ziyād, the deputy of Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya.'[131] Ḥusayn's aggressive reaction is not quite what one would expect from a saintly hero: '(in a disappointed and angry tone) "May death strike your mother, O Hurr. What do you want from us?"'[132] In fact, it is al-Ḥurr who shows more politeness than Ḥusayn: 'If it were not for your mother Fāṭima the Luminous, I would certainly use the same words.'[133]

Ḥusayn delivers a particularly long and wrathful speech in Act Two (pp. 66–71), and the choir twice implores him to stop. In the first intermezzo they sing: 'It is enough Ḥusayn, grandson of the Messenger of God, we are trembling very much as we listen to your curses, O grandson of the beloved of God',[134] but Ḥusayn still goes on, telling that 'every day is 'Āshūrā', every place is Karbala, and every person is Ḥusayn'.[135] He is not exactly soft-spoken, and uses threatening and abusive language (e.g. calling ʿUbayd Allāh bin Ziyād a 'bastard's son of a bastard', *anak zina putera si anak zina*).[136] For a second time the choir tries to intervene: 'Stop it please, O Ḥusayn, we repent, o Husayn,

we join forces with your descendants, O Ḥusayn',[137] but the tirade continues for another full page of the script. When he is finally finished, the 'godless group' merely reacts with 'Attack and kill Ḥusayn!'[138] Again, this very brief, laconic reply of the villains stands in stark contrast to Ḥusayn's long-winded diatribe, which may have an unintended humorous effect upon non-Shiʿīs.

The humane philosophy of 'Love thy enemies' is not something to which the *ahl al-bayt* subscribe. Instead, they view 'religion as blood and punishment'.[139] For example, Ḥusayn in his 'farewell address' exclaims: 'O God. You witness Yourself what godless (*derhaka*) things are done to me by your servants. O God, destroy them. Annihilate them. Don't let a single one remain on the face of this earth. Don't have mercy on them.'[140] In the last Act, towards the end of the play, Fatima binti Husayn (Fāṭima bint al-Ḥusayn), who has been taken captive after the massacre, delivers a rancorous speech in which she lashes out at the treacherous Kūfans:[141]

> Hey Kūfans! Hey you schemers and cheaters! We are truly the family of the Prophet, tested by God with your unreliable attitude and complete insincerity. You all have brought catastrophe upon us. Contrary to all expectations, however, this will bring fortune upon us, and God has blessed us with His knowledge, and we are the treasury of knowledge and wisdom, and we are the proofs and signs of God's greatness above His servants. God has glorified us with the glory of my grandfather [*datukku*, *sic*] the Messenger of God (PBUH), who possesses a glory superior to all creatures. Conversely, you have deceived us and cheated us, and you consider the killing of us as *ḥalāl*, and you have looted our possessions.

The 'human' aspect of her words comes to the fore in the cursing of the enemies, promising eternal revenge:[142]

> Perhaps you look at us now with happy eyes, and your hearts are perhaps filled with joy? God will contrive an appropriate vengeance on you. God possesses tricks superior to your gimmicks. [...] To hell with you all, and just wait for the curses and torments, which God will bring upon you.

There are several more instances in the play in which members of the Holy Family fly into a rage and this may lend them a human face, but does not necessarily make them sympathetic to a non-Shiʿa Malay public. The play ends with Zaynab's relatively long oratory which, according to historians of religion, appears to have established 'the practice of praising Ḥusayn and vilifying his killer'.[143] Zaynab is known in Shiʿī hagiography as such an empowering figure that one scholar has dubbed her the 'co-hero of Karbalā'', along with her brother, the 'martyred Imām Ḥusayn'.[144] Shiʿī sources report that 'she recited such a moving oration that she brought even the Umayyad troops guarding

the prisoners to tears'.[145] However, in Faisal Tehrani's rendition the audience may only hear an outraged woman, who curses the Kūfans, and is talking most angrily. The stage direction indicates that her voice should be a mixture of sadness, anger, zest and charm.[146] Vocal virtuosity is thus called for, but her hell-and-brimstone message is anything but charming. She tells the Kūfans, who are symbolic representatives of the Sunnīs, that they will eternally dwell in hell, and her final words are: 'Hey, what kind of community are you?!'[147] The latter outcry is a fine example of *Publikumsbeschimpfung* or 'Offending the Audience' if ever there was one.

Writing for change

During an interview in 2008, Faisal Tehrani gave a broad overview of his literary career, which had begun when he was sixteen following a creative writing course at the DBP. He admits that, at first, writing was 'more of an ego thing, a glamour thing, a money thing', and that he even produced some erotic literature in his youthful years, but on turning twenty-two he changed: 'I wanted to become a responsible writer. I wanted my writing to change society for the better.'[148] Going through his already impressive *oeuvre*, we notice that in his role as historical fiction author, he displays a certain fondness for epic struggles of cosmic dimensions between the forces of good and evil and a penchant for vendetta, set against the background of unjust suffering. In *1515* the protagonist is a Malay historian who rewrites the unfair colonial history that had put an end to the Golden Age of the Malays, and it is his pen which definitively makes Muslim Malays defeat the infidels from Portugal. In another prize-winning novel, *1511H [Kombat]* (1511 Hijri [Combat]), which takes place in the future, the year 1511/2087, a high-tech war takes place between 'Islam' and 'the *kafirs*' (i.e. America and its ally Israel in their stock roles), in which the fantasy of many of Faisal Tehrani's young readers comes true when Muslim soldiers take over the White House.[149] For Malaysian readers the play *Karbala* may perhaps seem to explore an unfamiliar and even controversial terrain, but viewed against the background of the earlier novels *1515* and *1511 [Kombat]*, which are highly popular and have won great acclaim, I think that there is some truth in Marcel Proust's saying that great authors are basically always writing the same book.

PART 4

CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS

14

ASPECTS OF SHIʿISM IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

A QUEST FOR SOCIAL RECOGNITION IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA (1998–2008)

Umar Faruk Assegaf

From something which was considered 'taboo' in its first public appearance during the early 1980s, Indonesians who identify themselves as Shiʿa have been constantly striving to establish their social identity among the Sunnī majority in the country. Despite political pressure from the Suharto regime in the corresponding period, they have managed to make tremendous progress in the last two decades, especially after 1998.

Indeed, the student-led reformation in 1998, which pushed for a democratic system in Indonesia, created a favourable socio-political climate for minority groups to develop, thus opening possibilities for Shiʿī followers. Consequently, the Shiʿī movement became more open and its followers were more confident in holding religious ceremonies in public and in promoting their beliefs to others. The phenomenon of the mushrooming Shiʿī community is conspicuously visible in the middle-to-upper sphere of society in the archipelago country, including scholars and academics. The number of Shiʿī-

affiliated institutions comprising social foundations or schools, including higher education, have been clearly observable all across the country.

Nevertheless, amidst this fascinating development, the Shiʿī community in Indonesia sustained internal fracture because of 'disharmony' among its elite leadership. This internal split created sharp rivalry and fierce social competition across the country, hindering the effort to gain social recognition.

Employing a longitudinal approach, this chapter undertakes a discussion on the presence and development of Shiʿism in modern Indonesia. Not only focusing on historical perspective and social movements, it also examines the current state of Shiʿism in Indonesia.

Before Reformasi (1970s-1998): the Madhab ahl al-bayt

Originating in the seventh-century split of the followers of ʿAlī from the rest of the Muslim community, the Shiʿa have identified themselves as those who believe that the legacy of the caliphate (the matter of succession) after the death of Muḥammad should go to the Prophet Muḥammad's family through his bloodline, represented by ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (son-in-law and paternal cousin of the Prophet) and his descendants with Fāṭima. Yet, in the previous chapters it has emerged quite clearly that throughout the centuries in Indonesia, the line between Sunnism and Shiʿism has been blurred. Although in the first stage of its development in Indonesia, Shiʿism[1] was not institutionalised clearly enough to enable us to identify its variants (Zaydī, Ismāʿilī and Ithnāʿasharī), some authors have suggested that it was the Ithnāʿashariyya which had spread in the archipelago.[2] In the context of contemporary Indonesia, this suggestion has also been supported by the findings of an investigation led by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, following the so-called 'Bangsri case' of 1984.[3]

A common approach adopted by Shiʿīs living in a majority Sunnī society is that of concealment (*taqiyya*). When Abdul Qadir Bafagih (head of the Pesantren Al-Khairat in Bangsri, Jepara, Central Java) publicly declared himself as Shiʿī in 1982, the Ministry of Religious Affairs was prompted to carry out a systematic study of the state of Shiʿism in the area. Abdul Qadir Bafagih—an Indonesian of Ḥaḍramī Arab origin—had converted to Ithnāʿashariyya Shiʿism after fifteen years of studying Shiʿism. It was reported that he later taught Shiʿism, and that his teachings attracted between 75 and 100 followers from Islamic religious schools (*pesantren*) in the surrounding areas.[4] However, in subsequent years the media reported that Abdul Qadir had successfully spread

Shiʿī teachings and expanded his influence across Java, through direct dialogues, recorded cassettes and by dispatching his former students to other Indonesian cities, including Surabaya, Bandung and Yogyakarta.

Being a minority group within a predominantly Sunnī Muslim population, the Indonesian Shiʿa face a number of challenges. This was especially so during the Suharto administration and in the years immediately following the Iranian Islamic Revolution, when the Shiʿī movement came under tight scrutiny by the government. As the term Shiʿa came to carry negative connotations in Indonesia, the term *ahl al-bayt*, or more precisely, the '*madhhab ahl al-bayt*', developed as a more acceptable alternative label for this group's religious identity. Thus, many Shiʿī institutions in the country have declared their orientation in Islamic thought as *madhhab ahl al-bayt*. They are convinced that in Indonesia *madhhab ahl al-bayt* (the *madhhab* of the Prophet's household) would be more appealing than Shiʿism, which has a direct reference to Iran's official *madhhab*.[5] Mahdi Alaydrus (a lecturer at the Shiʿī University, Madinatul Ilmi, Depok) remarked: 'The word Shiʿa has been politically smeared by anti-Shiʿī sentiment, while the word *ahl al-bayt* is present and clearly mentioned in the Qur'an.' At the same time he rejected accusations that the choice of the term *ahl al-bayt* had a hidden agenda to attract more followers from among the Sunnīs, and claimed that the use of *ahl al-bayt* was not meant to exploit Sunnīs' devotion toward the household of the Prophet. He went on to argue that the word Shiʿa had been misunderstood and wrongly related to the Islamic Revolution of Iran which had toppled the United States-approved Pahlevi regime, and thus this political stereotype portrayed Shiʿa Islam as a blood-thirsty denomination: 'In Indonesia, the word *ahl al-bayt* is much more welcome than the word Shiʿa despite the fact that there is no difference in these terms', he said.

Campus circles

The 1970s witnessed a succession of dramatic events that contributed to the rapid development of a global Islamic revival across the Muslim world, including Indonesia. One common theme across the diverse manifestations of this trend was a view that regarded perceived political successes such as the 1979 Iranian Revolution as resonating with an idealised perception of early Islam.[6] I would like to suggest here that the revivalist spirit that emerged in the late twentieth century assumed similar characteristics in many Muslim countries and was inspired by a shared conception of Islam as 'a complete system of life

theologically and politically'. It may be worth adding that the fifteenth century of the Islamic calendar was also expected to be 'the Century of Islamic Resurgence' (*Abad Kebangkitan Islam*).[7] Admittedly, in many cases, this spirit successfully restored credibility in Islam as a code of life superior to other ideologies; moreover, it also served to counter the influence of the West on young Muslims' minds, and helped limit the influence of Western ideas and culture in a number of Muslim societies. Indeed, as Esposito has argued, this revival led to a higher profile for Islam in Muslim politics and society.[8]

The indices of Islamic reawakening in aspects of Muslim personal life are many, including increased attention to religious observances (mosque attendance, prayer, fasting), proliferation of religious programming and publications, more emphasis upon Islamic dress and values, and the revitalisation of Sufism.[9] These are all phenomena which have become evident since the 1980s in Muslim communities across the world, including Indonesia. The spirit of global Islamic revivalism not only gave great impetus to the Islamic movements in Indonesia, but also had a considerable impact on socio-religious activities as well as the personal life of individual Muslims in the country. During this period, various Islamic movements became prominent in the country. A number of them, including Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia, Tarbiyah Islamiyah, Tablighi Jamaat and Darul Arqam, to mention some, were not attached to formal Islamic organisations, but were instead led by young Muslim intellectuals, who succeeded in spreading their influence through academic discussions on university campuses. Within the climate of censorship established by Suharto's New Order regime, secular universities, such as the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB) and the University of Indonesia (UI) in Jakarta, became nurseries and fertile ground for the early development of Islamic groups which often evolved as underground movements.[10] Shiʿism also spread through university circles in Indonesia in the 1980s. As Khomeini's victory in 1979 further invigorated the revivalist spirit, the establishment of an Islamic state in Iran unsurprisingly attracted the attention of Indonesian Muslim scholars.

The spread of Shiʿism in Indonesia at that time occurred on university campuses, and one of the most important factors behind this phenomenon was the spread of Islamic literature.[11] Over the last decades of the twentieth century, a boom in religious publication enterprises became visible through the appearance of translations of numerous works of Islamic thinkers from outside Indonesia, such as Muhammad Iqbal, Abu'l-Aʿla Maududi and Fazlur Rahman. Throughout the 1980s there was also a strong growth in the number of

Indonesian translations of the works of ʿAlī Shariʾati, Sayyid Tabataba'i and Ayatollah Mutahhari, Khomeini and other Shiʿī thinkers. Through such translations, the influence of Shiʿī thought was to surface in a wide variety of intellectual currents of the Indonesian Islamic discourse.[12]

One of the most significant manifestations of this new era was the flourishing of Islamic intellectual discourse and the emergence of young Muslim intellectuals, especially on university campuses. In his book *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia*, Michael Feener has highlighted the influence that Iranian Muslim thought had on young students in the years following the 1979 Iranian Revolution.[13] Indeed, a number of Indonesian students were clearly and increasingly inclined towards Shiʿism at that time. Most of them graduated from Western-style educational institutions, and as a result of coming from such a background they became successful in introducing Shiʿism to the educated Indonesian middle class. In addition to seminars and discussions, they also encouraged the translation and publication of Shiʿī thinkers' books as a part of their contribution to the dissemination of Shiʿism.

This group capitalised on deep transformations in Muslims' attitudes and understandings of 'Islamic activism' occurring during the 1980s and 1990s. If previously, political involvement was seen as the only way to contribute to the benefit of the nation and of religion, at this point in time, cultural interests, intellectual debates and philosophy gained a new position, as important loci of an Islamic revival.[14] In addition, a hallmark of this new mode of Islamic revival was the emphasis placed upon putting aside religious fanaticism and myopic views on various religious matters to develop, instead, an attitude of openness, and the spread of a popular motto of non-sectarianism.[15]

An exemplary figure of this phenomenon is Jalaluddin Rakhmat, a lecturer at Universitas Padjadjaran (Padjadjaran University, UNPAD) in Bandung, West Java.[16] In 1988, together with his colleagues Haidar Bagir, Ahmad Tafsir, Agus Effendi and Ahmad Muhajir, he established the Muthahhari Foundation in Bandung, an institution that focused on *daʿwa* and publishing. Since 1992, the foundation has expanded its scope to include the establishment of high schools across Java.[17] Since the 1980s, Jalaluddin Rakhmat has been widely recognised as the most active intellectual in spreading Shiʿism on campuses and more broadly to the educated middle class of Indonesian Muslims. In the post-Suharto era, Rakhmat also took leadership of the Shiʿī community by establishing the Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bayt Indonesia (IJABI), which will be discussed in more detail below. Other campus figures inclined towards Shiʿism include Dimitri Mahayana (a lecturer at Institute of Technology Bandung

(ITB) and former chairman of IJABI), Hadi Swastio (a lecturer at the Communication College and former general secretary of IJABI) and Yusuf Bakhtiar (formerly a deputy chief of Muthahhari Senior High School and currently a political activist in Amien Rais' National Mandate Party), as well as Sayuti Asshatri in University of Indonesia (UI), Agus Abu Bakar (UI),[18] Zulvan Lindan (University of Jayabaya) and Haidar Bagir (ITB).

The Hawza *connection*[19]

Another major stream in the development of Shiʿism in modern Indonesia has flowed through the more traditional institutions of Islamic education, including that of the Shiʿī *hawza*. Since the 1960s, there has been an increasingly active exchange of visits between Iranian *hawza*s and various Indonesian *pesantren*. For example, in 1962 a leading Shiʿī scholar from Iraq, Muhammad Reza Jaʿfari, came to Indonesia to visit the al-Khairiyya school in Bondowoso and to meet local Muslim leaders such as Hussein al-Habsyi (1921–94). The discussion lasted for four days, and following that event some teachers converted to Shiʿism.[20] This relationship between Iranian *hawza* and Indonesian *pesantren* intensified after the Revolution in 1979. Despite the mounting political pressure of the Suharto regime, these types of exchanges continued during the 1980s in connection with the Iranian *ʿulamā*'s' mission of exporting the principles of the Islamic Revolution. These connections contributed greatly to the dissemination of Shiʿism in Indonesia, as the increasing familiarity of local *ʿulamā* with their Shiʿī counterparts overseas made it possible to dispatch Indonesian students to *hawza*s in Iran. In this regard, two of the most important Ḥaḍramī Arab figures were Ahmad al-Habsyi (d.1994), leader of Pesantren ar-Riyadh in Palembang (South Sumatra); and Hussein al-Habsyi, who established the Yayasan Pesantren Islam (YAPI) at Bangil (East Java) in 1976.

Ahmad al-Habsyi, in Palembang, had established early contacts with *hawzas* in Iran, and had sent his students Umar Shahab and Hussein Shahab to study in Qum in 1974 and 1979, respectively.[21] The activities of Hussein al-Habsyi's *pesantren* in Bangil greatly contributed to the spread of Shiʿism in Indonesia, and any analysis of Shiʿī genealogy in the archipelago would not be complete without mention of him.[22] Born in Surabaya on 21 April 1921, Hussein al-Habsyi started his primary education at the Madrasah Al Khairiyah, the oldest Islamic educational institution in Surabaya and the same school where he later came to teach. In 1970, he set up a boarding school in Bon-

dowoso and another boarding school for boys in Kenep-Beji, Bangil. According to his acquaintances, this occurred after the Iranian Revolution, but it is possible that he had already become interested in this manifestation of Islam before 1979. In fact, it appears that when teaching at the al-Khairiyya, he, with the other teachers and students of the school, often encountered Middle Eastern figures with whom he could discuss Islamic teachings, including Shiʿī doctrines.[23] In the post-revolution years, Ahmad al-Habsyi and Hussein al-Habsyi fostered the rapid growth of Shiʿism in Indonesia through their acquaintances with Iranian scholars. In 1982, a delegation from Iran consisting of Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini, Ayatollah Masduqi and Hujjat al-Islam Mahmudi visited the YAPI. As a result of this meeting with Hussein al-Habsyi, the *hawza ʿilmiyya* in Qum agreed to accept ten Indonesian students from his school in Bangil each year. The following year, Muhsin Labib, Ibrahim al Habsyi, Rusdi Alaydrus, Thoyyib Nafis, Mukhtar al Jufri, Umar Alatas, Ahmad Baragbah, Hasan Tono, Muhammad and Musam were sent to Qum.[24] On their return, after several years of study, these students became the leading preachers of Shiʿism in Indonesia. Since then, the number of Indonesian students in Qum has increased, to the point that after a decade Qum graduates in Indonesia numbered more than a hundred.[25]

A number of these YAPI alumni returned from their time in Qum to establish and run their own *pesantren* and to take active roles in several Indonesian Islamic organisations. Among them, the most prominent were Zahir Yahya (leader of the Al-Kautsar Foundation in Malang, East Java) and former head of YAPI, Miqdad (head of Pesantren Darut Taqrib in Jepara, Central Java), Fathoni Hadi (founder of the Al-Hujjah Foundation in Jember, East Java, and, currently member of staff at the Islamic College for Advanced Studies, the London branch of Islamic higher education in Jakarta), Muhammad Amin Sufyan (head of the Samudera Foundation in Surabaya), Abdurrahman Bima (elected in 2009 as member of Parliament from the Democratic Party), Husein Alkaff (adviser at the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung), Herman al-Munthahhar (head of the Amirul Mukminin Foundation in Pontianak, West Kalimantan), Muhammad al-Jufri and Abdul Aziz al-Hinduan. The arrival of Qum alumni in the late 1970s and early 1980s helped consolidate the growing Shiʿī movement in Indonesia, as they also directly engaged other Muslims in informal religious gatherings (*pengajian*), which were held in specific locations and attended by a limited circle. On these occasions, Qum Alumni also performed Shiʿī rituals (*majlis*), like *Kumayl* supplication, ʿĀshūrāʾ commemorations, and so on.[26]

It should be noted that whilst the first generation of Qum alumni was more inclined toward religious philosophy, the second and following generations were more concerned with Islamic jurisprudence. Most of the foundations and *pesantren*s established in the 1990s, including al-Jawad in Bandung (established in 1993), al-Hadi in Pekalongan (1989), al-Muntazhar in Jakarta (1991) and Mulla Sadra in Bogor (1993), tend to accentuate the importance of 'Jaʿfarī' (Twelver Shiʿī) jurisprudence. These Qum alumni have nonetheless played a major role in shaping the variety of religious tendencies among the Shiʿī community in Indonesia. As they focused on answering inquiries about matters of Islamic law, I shall herein refer to them as *ustadh*.[27] Schools of this type have sometimes sparked public concerns and even resistance from the larger Sunnī majority of Indonesian Muslims.

Internal Shiʿī rivalries

The spread of Shiʿism in Indonesia from the 1970s to the 1990s was marked by different streams of propagation which were stimulated by the two groups outlined above: the Campus Circle and the *ustadh*.[28] These two groups have different educational backgrounds and orientations. The first group consists of academics and educated individuals who graduated from Indonesian or Western educational institutions, and who advocate an inclusive non-sectarian form of behaviour by using philosophical approaches and putting aside religious fanaticism. The latter mostly comprises graduates from Middle Eastern institutions in Iran, Syria and Egypt,[29] and who are traditionally *fiqh*-oriented and rigidly adhere to the Shiʿī Islamic school of thought.

The different socio-political background and orientation of these two groups became the embryo of an internal conflict between the leaders of the Shiʿī community in the following decades. This development was not clearly visible at first when most Indonesian Shiʿa were still cloaked in *taqiyya*. In the open and democratic climate of the post-Suharto era, however, differences began to surface, leading to some clashes between the emerging Shiʿī community and the dominant Sunnī population of Indonesian Muslims.The first sign of disharmony between these two groups emerged in the failure of the first Shiʿī organisation, the Majlis Ahlulbait di Indonesia (MAHDI).

MAHDI was established in the early 1990s to meet the perceived need for a unifying organisation across the archipelago. Headed by Ahmad Baragbah, head of *pesantren* al-Hadi in Pekalongan, and with Furqon Bukhari as secretary, MAHDI had an advisory board of fourteen members which included

Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Umar Shahab and other prominent Shiʿī figures, of both *ustadh* and Campus Circle backgrounds. As MAHDI did not function properly, its programmes failed, it was never officially registered as a socio-religious organisation in the Department of Home Affairs, and soon Rakhmat and his associates withdrew from it. The establishment of MAHDI was, however, overshadowed by mounting political pressure from the authoritarian Suharto administration which did not allow Shiʿī activities in Indonesia to develop. During the rule of this regime, especially at the beginning of the 1980s, Shiʿism was under tight scrutiny by the government because of the suspicion that it would bring the Islamic revolution to Indonesia. For instance, the organisation would face difficulties in obtaining its legal status from the government. Therefore, as Zulkifli has argued in his thesis, the key factor in MAHDI's downfall was that there were differences of opinion between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates on one hand, and Ahmad Baragbah and the remaining *ustadh* on the other, particularly regarding the legal status of MAHDI as a Shiʿī organisation. I believe, however, that the failure of MAHDI particularly was not simply due to its legal status, but more importantly because of the distinctive socio-political background and orientation between Kang Jalal, which represented the Campus Circle, and Ahmad Baragbah, which represented the *ustadh* group.[30]

Reformation era (1998–2008)

The student-led reformation movement (Ind. *Reformasi*) that brought about the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 facilitated the establishment of a democratic system and the creation of a favourable national socio-political climate for minority groups across Indonesia, including the Shiʿa. As the 'dissimulation era' (*masa taqiyya*) was brought to an end, the Shiʿī movement became more open and actively engaged with the emerging Indonesian public sphere, thus accelerating its spread through the country. Its followers became more confident in showing their identity, promoting their beliefs, and holding religious ceremonies in public. With no political pressure, and only minimal social constraints, they freely practiced their beliefs.

However, despite this more favourable socio-political climate, the polarisation between *ustadh* and the Campus Circle continued to widen. Their disagreements grew acute and fierce polemics occurred, especially as the *ustadh* argued that the Campus Circle did not sincerely convey the Shiʿī mission because they did not include practical Islamic jurisprudence (*fikih ʿamaliyya*).

According to the *ustadh*, Shiʿism needed a personal religious commitment based on the teaching of the Jaʿfarī school of law. In contrast, the Campus Circle stressed the importance of establishing an inclusive community, regardless of the orientation of their school of law, and held high the principle of non-sectarianism made popular during their experience of a campus-based Islamic revival in the 1980s and 1990s.

Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bayt Indonesia (IJABI)

Despite such differences, after the fall of Suharto in 1998, Shiʿī leaders in Indonesia tried to establish some form of organisational unity to encompass both those from the Campus Circle and the *ustadh*. One of the most important events in the course of these developments was a meeting carried out at the Al-Huda Islamic Cultural Centre in Jakarta (ICC),[31] where all parties agreed they would support Jalaluddin Rakhmat's initiative to establish the IJABI.

On 1 July 2000, in Bandung, West Java, Rakhmat publicly declared the establishment of the IJABI, in the presence of at least 2,000 of its members from about twenty provinces, but without the support of the *ustadh*.[32] Rakhmat himself was nominated Chairman of the Advisory Board (Ketua Dewan Syuro), together with twelve other members, among whom figured Haidar Bagir (Director of Mizan Press) and Muchtar Adam (a politician from West Java's Partai Amanat Nasional). The Executive Director was Dr Dimitri Mahaya from ITB. Currently, IJABI claims 145 regional branch offices across the country, with a membership of 2.5 million. During a recent interview, Rakhmat declared he had chosen Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallah of Lebanon[33] as the organisation's *Marjaʿ-i-taql īd*.[34] As a fact, according to Rakhmat, Faḍlallah lives in a pluralistic society in Lebanon where 90 per cent of Muslims in that country are Sunnīs. Rakhmat was convinced that Faḍlallah has been successfully establishing the Shiʿī minority of Lebanon in fighting ignorance, fanaticism and sectarianism. This is so much in line with Rakhmat's efforts to promote pluralism in Indonesia.[35]

The establishment of IJABI marked a crucial step in the development of Shiʿism in Indonesia, as it was its first legally-recognised mass organisation. In contrast to other Shiʿī institutions in Indonesia, most of which tended to conceal their Shiʿī identity, IJABI clearly stated in its constitution its allegiance to the *madhhab ahl al-bayt*. Before the establishment of IJABI, Rakhmat refused to be labelled as a Shiʿī follower; however, he later admitted having applied *taqiyya* at an earlier point in his life. 'As a mother, for a while, I was willing to

suffer for concealing this embryo, but with good timing, the baby has now to be delivered [...]', as quoted by *Gatra* in describing the declaration of IJABI.[36] It should be noted that IJABI was not meant for Shiʿīs only, but as stated in its constitution, the organisation was open to followers of all *madhhab*s. The purpose of IJABI was stated to be the support of the propagation of Islam in Indonesia, based on the teachings of the Prophet's family (*ahl al-bayt*).

In other social aspects, IJABI maintained its efforts to cooperate with other Indonesian Muslim organisations and expressed more broadly-shared sentiments in its commitment to social welfare and people's well-being in a bid to be welcomed in the public sphere. It was involved, for example, in relief operations in Aceh after the 2004 tsunami,[37] and it participated, along with other organisations, in a public protest against the Jyllands-Posten Muḥammad cartoons controversy in 2006.[38] Nevertheless, despite being officially registered as a mass organisation on the same level as Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, IJABI still struggles to gain broader social legitimacy.

In addition to its social activities, IJABI has also continued to foster good relations with the government, mostly through the Department of Religious Affairs. In this regard, following its third national congress, in August 2008, IJABI was reported to have paid an informal visit to the Department to meet the Director General, Nasaruddin Umar. The purpose of the meeting, according to Rakhmat as quoted by the Department's website, was to introduce the newly-elected executive members of IJABI to Nasaruddin Umar, who was a Nahdatul Ulama cadre and who was already familiar with Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Furthermore, it should be stressed that this was an occasion to bond Shiʿism to the 'official face' of Islam in the country; demonstrations of this were reflected, firstly, in the Minister's declaration that 'Shiʿism in Indonesia has undergone a process of domestication (*proses penjinakan*) so that its existence poses no problems', and secondly, in Jalaluddin Rakhmat's gratitude with regard to the Ministry's support in organising IJABI's congress in Makassar.[39]

It was not long, however, before issues arose that significantly compromised the ability of IJABI to bring together the different communities of *hawza* and Campus Circle Shiʿa. One of the most contentious issues was that of leadership. On the one hand, Rakhmat argued that IJABI should not have to follow the concept of *velāyat-e faqīh*[40] which would give the highest authority to religious leaders, because being an independent and democratic social organisation, IJABI would be required to place a congress at the highest level. On the other hand, the *ustadh* group accused Rakhmat of wanting to establish an organisation not representative of Shiʿī basic principles. As Jalaluddin

Rakhmat group was more assertive and numerous, the other group eventually withdrew its support and distanced itself from the process that brought the formation of IJABI.

Following up on the problem of leadership, the issue seemed to be deeper than the authority structure of the organisation and shifted on the criteria required of the chairman. Rakhmat's faction believed that a leader should be elected democratically regardless of his ethnic background. By contrast the other group, supported by the *ustadh*, argued that the leader had to be a descendant of the Prophet as decreed in the *ḥadīth* and in line with the Qurʾan. As it has been explained above, this fracture became impossible to heal, being built on a fundamentally different standpoint; and since the establishment of IJABI, the Indonesian Shiʿī community has been divided into two groups which Jalaluddin Rakhmat has labelled IJABI and non-IJABI.[41]

Other Shiʿī organisations in contemporary Indonesia

The *ustadh* here, however, for their part, were not averse to capitalising on certain aspects of Indonesian democracy in their attempts to further their own position within the country's burgeoning public sphere, as they set up numerous foundations including the Forum Ahlibait Jawa Timur (FAJAR) and Ikatan Ahlibait Wilayah Jawa Barat (KIBLAT), as well as at least one university, the Madinatul Ilmi in Depok. Some *ustadh* had been involved with local foundations even well before the Reformation era. For instance, Fathoni Hadi established the Al-Hujjah Foundation in Jember in 1987, Ahmad Baragbah established Al-Hadi in 1989, Abdullah Assegaf founded the Al-Wahdah Foundation in Solo in 1994, and Rusdi Alyadrus established the Ath-Thohir Foundation in Surabaya in 2000. In addition, some of them were appointed as leaders or *ustadh* at existing Shiʿī foundations, like Zahir Yahya at the Al-Kautsar Foundation in Malang (East Java), Husein al-Kaff at the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung, Abdullah Assegaf at the Ahlul Bayt Youth Association (Ikatan Pemuda Ahlul Bait Indonesia or IPABI) in Bogor, Muhammad Syuaib at the Al-Mujtaba Foundation in Purwakarta (West Java), and Herman Al-Munthahar at the Amirul Mukminin Foundation in Pontianak (West Kalimantan).

In mid-2000, Muhsin Labib with three of his Qum alumni colleagues established FAJAR in Malang. The establishment was initially meant to provide an umbrella for Shiʿī foundations in East Java. According to its statute, the organisation was also meant to realise an Islamic civil society based on the

concept of *velāyat-e faqīh*. In a bid to implement this concept, FAJAR's advisory board would act in Indonesia as a leading hand of the *Marjaʿ-i-taqlīd*, Sayyid Ali Khamenei of Iran. To that end, this advisory board was led by Zahir bin Yahya, who claimed to have obtained his appointment directly from Iran. However, the presence of FAJAR created divisions (pro- and con-) with other Shiʿī foundations across East Java as not all were ready to join the organisation, and expressed again contested issues about leadership of the Indonesian Shiʿī community.[42]

Another initiative of the *ustadh* was the West Java Ahl Bayt Association (Ikatan Ahlibait Wilayah Jawa Barat-KIBLAT), established in West Java in August 2001 with the support of Shiʿī foundations operating in five cities, that is, IPABI-Bogor, Al Jawad-Bandung, Al Kautsar-Bandung, Al Mujtaba-Purwakarta, Al Kadzim-Cirebon and Al Syifa-Garut, and was jointly announced by Abdullah Assegaf (IPABI, Bogor) and Alkaff (Al Jawad, Bandung). It is worth noting that Rakhmat's Yayasan Mutohhari, despite being based in Bandung, was from the outset excluded from KIBLAT. No significant activities, however, have so far been reported from this organisation.

During early 1998, Hasan Dalil,[43] with the support of several *ustadh*, established the Madinatul Ilmi University in Sawangan, Depok. The institution comprised both an Islamic Institution of Higher Education (Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Agama Islam—STAI) and an Economic Institution of Higher Education (Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi—STIE). These institutions have developed a combination of *pesantern*-based and modern-styled education, in collaboration with the International Colleges of Islamic Sciences (ICIS) in London, headed by Sayyid Mohammed Ali Shahrestani. Under this collaboration, graduates of the Madinatul Ilmi University of Depok would also be able to gain accreditation from the British Accreditation Council in the United Kingdom.

In addition to institutional activities, *ustadh* were committed to further their studies at postgraduate level in various universities in Indonesia and overseas. Abdurrahman Alaydrus (also known as Abdurrahman Bima) and Muhsin Labib both obtained their doctoral degrees in Philosophy from the State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah; Umar Shahab obtained his doctoral degree in Islamic studies from Malaysia; and Abdullah Beik obtained his postgraduate degree from Pakistan. Consequently, they were able to gain academic status in universities across the country. Some of them have also become politicians and members of Parliament.[44] Such developments should be seen in the context of the broader efforts of Indonesian Shiʿī communities to obtain public recognition. Muhsin Labib, in an interview with the writer,

said that the current tendency among *ustadh* was to become involved in a broad spectrum of socio-political activities with an 'unmarked uniform'.[45] It was considered smarter and more effective than only using Shiʿī infrastructural facilities, he added.

Public reactions

As a minority among a large Sunnī majority, the Shiʿī community in Indonesia has managed, superficially at least, to avoid major frictions as they are aware of the fact that the top priority of their social agenda is to consolidate their own organisations in a bid to gain wider social recognition. More importantly, although they have obtained a degree of approval from the government, they still face challenges because of a lack of clarification from the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) on whether Shiʿism is regarded as a recognised form of Islam in the country. The last decree of the MUI on this issue was made in 1984, warning Indonesian Muslims to be mindful of Shiʿism in the wake of the Iranian Revolution. Thus far, there has been no further statement updating this ruling.

The unclear status of Shiʿism in Indonesia has generated mixed reactions from Indonesia's Sunnī followers, and their attitudes can be classified into three categories. Firstly, there are those who have adopted a lenient attitude, and who believe that there is no fundamental difference between Shiʿism and Sunnism. Therefore, differences can be easily put aside for the sake of a united community. This group includes some leading scholars, for instance, Quraish Shihab, who wrote a book entitled *Sunnah-Syiah bergandengan tangan! Mungkinkah? Kajian atas Konsep ajaran dan Pemikiran* (Sunnism and Shiʿism Hand in Hand! Is it Possible? An Analysis of Concept and Thought).[46] Similarly, Abdurrahman Wahid and some NU leaders have also displayed a more open attitude toward Shiʿism. In addition to their lenient attitude, such figures often attend Shiʿī meetings and participate in open discussions with their Shiʿī counterparts.

A majority of Indonesian Muslims have shown a moderate stance towards Shiʿism. This includes the elites of some major mass organisations, like NU and Muhammadiyah, who, despite recognising the existence of some differences between Shiʿism and Sunnism, believe that Shiʿism still belongs within the sphere of Islam, and as such try to avoid any conflict or public debate.[47] Nonetheless, they have expressed concerns about some elements of the Shiʿī community, specifically those in the community who provocatively show their

distinct beliefs by smoking or hanging around outdoors during the time of *Jumʿa* (Friday) prayers, which are considered mandatory for Sunnī followers but not for the Shiʿī.[48]

Finally, there is a small group mostly representative of puritan 'Salafi' groups who consider Shiʿism to be outside the pale of legitimate Islam. Among the most active cluster of anti-Shiʿīs is the Al Bayyinat group in Surabaya which is chaired by the Ḥaḍramī Thohir Alkaf, ironically himself an alumnus of YAPI, in Bangil. Alkaf, a student of Hussein al-Habsyi, believes that not only are Shiʿīs infidels but also that it would be permissible for their blood to be spilled.

Over recent years there have been several cases of resistance to and even violent reactions against Shiʿism in Indonesia in various parts of Java and Madura. For instance, on 24 December 2006, 500 angry villagers in Jambesari village, Bondowoso, attacked 150 IJABI members who were performing routine prayers, destroying three houses, a small mosque and a car belonging to the local IJABI chairman. Local Sunnī residents have objected to the presence of Shiʿīs in their community and accused them of deviant Islamic beliefs and heresy. In another related incident on 8 April 2007 in Jember, East Java, an angry crowd surrounded a house belonging to Suwarno, the local chairman of IJABI. They demanded that the IJABI desist from spreading Shiʿī teachings. In a rally in front of the local office of the public prosecutor in May 2007, some 500 people in Bangil urged the government to act swiftly against 'deviant elements' in society, wielding a large banner proclaiming: 'Shiʿa Go to Hell'.

The government's standpoint

In November 2007, the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUA) issued a *fatwa* providing nine criteria to determine which Islamic groups should be regarded as 'deviant' (Ind. *aliran sesat*). Although MUI has thus far not mentioned Shiʿism in this connection, the criteria are contentious and debatable, and the *fatwa* itself has raised multiple interpretations. For instance, a deviant group is defined as one which applies alternative interpretations of the Qur'an to those 'generally acceptable' to mainstream Sunnism. Hinting at the fact that MUI can monopolise interpretation, under this *fatwa* Shiʿism could be included as a deviant group, as some aspects of Shiʿī teachings are derived from different interpretations of scripture.

In December 2007 the Shiʿī-affiliated magazine *Syiar* interviewed the MUI Chairman Umar Shihab, who restated that the MUI *fatwa* did not mean to include any particular *madhhab* in its *fatwa* on 'deviant groups'. According to

Umar, the distinction between Sunnism and Shiʿism could be equated with a difference among *madhhab*s, and MUI would not involve itself in judging any *madhhab*: 'If the Islamic world has already accepted Shiʿism, why should MUI refuse it?' he asked. This statement is important for Shiʿism as a shield against possible violent attacks from opponent groups. However, the impact of Umar's statement was limited since this was only an interview and not a *fatwa*. For this reason, the fear that the *fatwa* would be misinterpreted and misused is reasonable, and the Shiʿī community became worried that it could undergo an experience similar to that of the Jamaah Ahmadiyah. For this reason, the Shiʿī community currently continues to strive to gain the heart of the *umma* as the pathway to social legitimacy.

In a recent interview, the Chairman of MUI's Fatwa Committee, Dr Anwar Ibrahim, said that the proliferation of Shiʿism in Indonesia was still within the mainstream of Islam. However, he admitted there was an extremist group in Shiʿism that might possibly be a deviant group (*ghulat*).[49] That was the reason, he added, why MUI issued its *fatwa* in 1984, to remind the Islamic community to be aware of this element. 'So far, there has been no public concern or complaints about Shiʿī teaching in Indonesia. But, it is only an extreme group that would certainly create conflict in the society', he said. Anwar's statement here presents a reflection of the position of MUI with regard to the proliferation of Shiʿism in Indonesia. As long as Shiʿism does not foster public concerns, MUI would regard it as of no consequence.

In line with MUI, the Ministry of Religious Affairs also regards the Shiʿī community as the same as other religious groups or movements. The Department has developed various means of communication with all Islamic mass organisations in Indonesia, including those belonging to the Shiʿī community. 'We do not discriminate one for the other. They [the Shiʿī community] will always be welcome if they want to establish a good relationship with us', stated the Secretary of the Directorate General of Islam's Social Guidance, Mudzakir. He stressed that the case of Shiʿism is very different from that of Ahmadiyah, which has been labelled by MUI as a deviant group. Further, he concluded: 'there is no problem with Shiʿism at all'.[50]

The Head of the Research and Development Body of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Atho Mudzar, has also weighed in on the issue, stating that, as a religious group, the proliferation of Shiʿism poses no problem as long as it does not disseminate a political doctrine against the state ideology, *Pancasila*. 'If they do not uphold a political belief which is against the state ideology, we have no problem with them', he said.[51] According to Atho, one of his Depart-

ment's responsibilities is to secure the harmony of religious life (*kerukunan beragama*) in the country, hence, within this framework the government would never limit the rights of any religious groups to exist, but the government would strive to maintain social stability and security. 'If there is violent action against a minority in the country, it is not government's initiative, but a criminal initiative', he stressed.[52]

Nadhatul Ulama

With its moderate policy, NU, as one of the major religious mass organisations in the country and claiming more than 30 million members, has presumably been serving as an 'anchorage' of Shiʿī proliferation, as in its traditionalist approach to Islam it has been able to include some of the elements of ʿAlid devotion historically present in local manifestations of Islam.

There are indeed some points for possible convergence between members of NU—or other similar affiliated traditionalist Muslim organisations—and Indonesian Shiʿa, and this has also triggered an academic curiosity and desire for better understanding of the relationship between NU and Shiʿism. To begin with, the most prominent figure in NU, Abdurrahman Wahid (d.2009), developed a reputation for a lenient attitude towards Shiʿism. On many occasions, he has asserted that Shiʿism is culturally (yet not politically!) equal to NU, and that he strongly believes that a major part of the religious practice of many NU members has its roots in Shiʿī traditions.[53] This lenient attitude has certainly been a 'welcoming gesture' to Shiʿism, as many of the NU members across the country rely on Wahid's statements in judging Shiʿism. Said Agil Siradj, another prominent NU figure who spent fifteen years studying in Mecca, appears to share Wahid's views. He has insisted that the difference between Shiʿism and NU is not significant, and only pertains to some minor matters. He has affirmed that 'NU is Shiʿism without *imāma*', meaning that the difference lies in the matter of Islamic leadership.[54] His statement has been widely quoted by the local media, and has certainly changed the way NU members perceive Shiʿism, proving that the efforts of both Wahid and Said Agil to emphasise similarities rather than differences have had a great impact on the local development of Shiʿism.

With regard to the cultural affinities between Shiʿism and the Muslim traditionalist community, there has been an ongoing debate about the influence of Shiʿī teachings on various Indonesian Muslim traditions. NU commonly celebrates certain religious events, especially in association with the dead, such

as visiting tombs, honouring the dead, Haul, Tahlil and the Maulid,[55] which share many similarities with Shiʿī practices. In this regard, the Chairman of the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama, Hasyim Muzadi, admits that some Shiʿī traditions are similar to those of NU's, especially in their admiration and respect for the Prophet's family, but he has shown no concerns about the possible conversion of NU members to Shiʿism: 'I believe that an NU member could not be easily influenced by Shiʿism because of culturally strong roots in the NU tradition. Once he is influenced by Shiʿism, he will soon be back to the old-long tradition.'[56]

Muhammadiyah

In a way similar to NU, Muhammadiyah also considers Shiʿism to be within the boundaries of Islam. According to the Chairman of the Central Committee of Muhammadiyah, Din Syamsuddin, the relationship between his organisation and Iran has been improving as 'reciprocal visits between dignitaries on both sides have continued intensively'; it should also be pointed out that Syamsuddin himself speaks Farsi, and has spent some time in Tehran teaching modern Islam. This good relationship has also emerged from the fact that as many as 98 young leaders of Muhammadiyah have received scholarships from the Iranian government to study as graduate and postgraduate students in several cities in Iran such as Qum, Mashhad and Tehran. Muhammadiyah presence in Iran is well-established to the extent that it has a special branch office, Pengurus Cabang Istimewa, in Tehran.[57] According to Syamsuddin, Muhammadiyah and Shiʿism have points of comparability in their intellectual traditions, both being based on rationalism,[58] a tool which they both advocate should be used to understand the allegorical passages of the Qurʾan.

Syamsuddin had deplored the recent attacks against Shiʿī Muslims, arguing that the existing theological differences were only being used as an excuse to justify the violence. However, he suggested that the expansion of the Shiʿī community after the Reformasi era had not been as fast as in the previous decade 'because something which is banned is more attractive'.[59]

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the complexity of the dynamics affecting the Shiʿī community in Indonesia, both on the issue of the propagation of their beliefs and in gaining social recognition amidst the overwhelming Sunnī majority.

Before the Reformasi era, the Shiʿī movement in Indonesia was constrained by political pressure and suspicion from the government. In the early 1980s, the movement was under tight scrutiny by the government for the suspicion that it would import the Islamic revolution to Indonesia. Consequently, the Shiʿī community had to take up secretive and clandestine patterns and accordingly applied *taqiyya*. Their religious organisations were facing difficulties in obtaining legal status from the government, and many Shiʿī foundations tended to hide their real identity. Nevertheless, over the 1980s and 1990s the dissemination of Shiʿism made unprecedented progress and it became a popular topic of discussion among Indonesian students. Works by leading Shiʿī thinkers were commonly circulated in the campus spheres, and the dispatch of Indonesian students to Shiʿī centres of learning abroad was carried out smoothly.

Indonesia's democratic system in the post-Suharto era has offered both opportunities and challenges to the Shiʿī community. It has given new opportunities to the Shiʿī community in expanded freedom of religious practice. After the 1998 reformation, the Shiʿī movement became more open and began a confident promotion of their beliefs in the public sphere. Without political pressure or any significant social constraints, the Shiʿī community freely exercised its beliefs and had its organisations legally recognised. Yet, in spite of the favourable socio-political climate, it also suffered internal frictions due to the polarisation between the communities organised around various *ustadh* and those originating outside campus circles. As has been discussed in the chapter, the spread of Shiʿism was marked by two streams of propagation stimulated by two different groups, the *ustadh* and the Campus Circle. These two groups actively promoted Shiʿism with an ultimate common goal of gaining social recognition in contemporary Indonesia in order to ensure their survival as a community in the long term. However, their distinctive socio-political backgrounds caused them to come into conflict with each other as they also employ different methods and strategies. The internal friction was perhaps inevitable, and this may eventually hinder further progress in the development of Shiʿism in contemporary Indonesia.

15

ONE BIG FAMILY? DYNAMICS OF INTERACTION AMONG THE 'LOVERS OF THE *AHL AL-BAYT*' IN MODERN JAVA

Chiara Formichi

This final chapter focuses on the formation of Ahlul Bayt communities in Java, drawing from both the historical configurations of ʿAlid piety illustrated in the introductory chapter to this volume, and the previous contribution by Umar Assegaf. This chapter identifies the dynamics that led some Indonesians to convert to Shiʿism in the 1960s-1980s, and demonstrates how these very dynamics—mediated by the proselytisation process—have affected the development of patterns of ʿAlid and Shiʿī devotion in contemporary Java; in doing so, it argues how behind a façade of homogeneity there lie diverse and deeply-nuanced approaches to ʿAlid devotion. These complex expressions of ʿAlid loyalism are examined and interpreted as the result of different trajectories of conversion, as well as the origin of intra-group tensions.[1]

As discussed in earlier contributions to this volume, ʿAlid piety emerged as a stream of broader patterns of devotionalism centred on the family of the Prophet, the *ahl al-bayt*. In contemporary Indonesia, however, the label 'lovers of the *ahl al-bayt*' (*pecinta Ahlul Bayt*) has come to be used as an alternative term for Shiʿa Islam, to counter the effects of a stigmatisation process of Shiʿism initiated by the Sunnī religious establishment in the early 1980s.[2] The

first Shiʿī organisation in the country, for example, bears the name Ikatan Jamaʾah Ahlul Bayt Indonesia (IJABI). Also, Ayatollah Sayyid al-Musawi's volume *Peshawar Nights*, initially translated in Indonesian as *Mazhab Syia*, was reprinted in 2009 under the title *Mazhab Pecinta Keluarga Nabi: Kajian al-Quran dan Sunnah*. To overcome misunderstandings, throughout this chapter I use ʿAlid piety and ʿAlid loyalism whenever I refer to rituals and devotional practices directed towards ʿAlī and his progeny. Shiʿism will be used when dealing with a well-defined religious system consistent with Jaʿfarī *fiqh*. 'Ahlul Bayt' is then used broadly when the focus shifts away from doctrinal differences between ʿAlid devotion and Shiʿī theology. This chapter has developed from the observation that the grassroots of Ahlul Bayt communities in Java comprise two major subgroups: one grounded in a recasting of genealogical and spiritual lineages, and the other arising in response to the Iranian Islamic Revolution.

The origins of Ahlul Bayt communities in Java

A portion of the Indonesian Ahlul Bayt community recognises an ancestral allegiance to ʿAlid devotionalism; however, among them there have been divergent recastings of their histories and identities. Devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* recognise different historical ʿAlid referents, as Ḥaḍramī *sayyid*s and the Javanese tend to hold different views on whence their traditions of ʿAlid piety originate. Another major difference is that while the *sayyid*s tend to direct their attention to doctrine and Jaʿfarī *fiqh* and to be involved in *daʿwa* (proselytising) activities, the Javanese maintain their focus on rituality, for the most part staying disconnected from Jaʿfarī jurisprudence, and maintaining an exclusivist approach. The next two sections examine the emergence of Ahlul Bayt communities in Java in the second half of the twentieth century, a phenomenon which I observe as initiated by the Ḥaḍramī *sayyid*s in East Java during the 1960s and 1970s. In what follows I also suggest that it is on the scion of this 'Arab awakening', and the impact of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, that some Javanese connected to the Sultans' palaces (the *kraton*) began to reinterpret local traditions within the framework of ʿAlid devotion.

Another section of the Ahlul Bayt community originated instead as a sole consequence of the Iranian Revolution. Zulkifli has argued that this event's major outcome for Indonesian Muslims was the spread of Islamic revolutionarism.[3] While this holds partially true, here I would like to shift the focus away from politics, suggesting that the incoming flux of Shiʿī literature to the archi-

pelago, and the increasing number of Indonesian students attending classes at Qum's religious schools, had a much greater effect on the local Muslim population, fostering the dissemination of Iranian philosophy, mysticism, jurisprudence and history. This phenomenon resulted in the 1980s and early 1990s in Sunnī Muslims being drawn towards Shiʿī Islam on two different aspects: doctrine and philosophy. The two communities which formed around these different aspects of Shiʿism have tended to be composed largely of Indonesians of Arab and Javanese descent, respectively.

Despite the evident connections linking the members of these groups—kinship, marriage or teacher–student relations—I could hardly find any common feature in the centres I visited across Java. As will become evident in the following pages, the activities that take place during the first nine days of Muḥarram, which lead to the commemoration of Imām Ḥusayn's martyrdom at Karbalāʾ on the tenth day, bear witness to the mixture of local traditions, (fixed) rituality and the desire to shape a religious Islamic identity clearly distinct from Sunnī Islam and similarly distinctive among different groups of devotees of the *ahl al-bayt*. Within this perspective, IJABI—the Ahlul Bayt organisation established by Jalaluddin Rakhmat in 2001 under the patronage of Abdurrahman Wahid, marking a breakthrough in post-Suharto religious liberalism[4]—appears to have failed in unifying the community as an umbrella organisation for foundations (*yayasan*) and schools (*pesantren*) scattered across the country and representative of multiple orientations within the broad spectrum of practices of devotion and 'love' for the *ahl al-bayt*. This observation, first elaborated in 2009,[5] was confirmed by the formation, in 2012, of ABI—the Ahlul Bait Indonesia—in open competition to IJABI, as representative of Shiʿa *pesantren* and foundations committed to Jaʿfari *fiqh*, and interested in closer ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.[6]

This chapter identifies four subgroups within the *Ahlul Bayt* community in Java, and much attention is dedicated to the stories of conversion of leading members of these groups, their patterns of devotion as observed during the first ten days of Muḥarram and the impact they have brought on their surrounding environment. Attention is thus also dedicated to the ways through which the teachings of these groups have been spread—a process which emerges to be closely connected to personal relations. This peculiarity helps to explain how what might appear as the perceptions, reflections and experiences of single individuals are actually accepted as knowledge by their followers.[7]

Sayyids' *ancestral allegiance to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq*

Here I approach two groups of devotees who connect their ʿAlid loyalism to patterns of ancestral devotion. The first one is represented by Arab *sayyid*s in Java who are descendants of the Prophet by way of ʿIsa al-Muhājir (820–924 CE), and the Bā ʿAlawī, who had migrated to Southeast Asia around the eighteenth century, as expounded by Ismail Alatas in his contribution. The second subgroup comprises 'indigenous' Javanese families who trace their ancestry to local royalty and, more specifically, to families linked to the Sultan's palace in Yogyakarta known as the *kraton*.

The idea that Ḥaḍramī *sayyid*s were originally Shiʿa is deeply embedded in the perspective of some members of this community.[8] This position originates from two considerations, one linked to the historical origins of Indonesian *sayyids*, and the other to the survival of elements of ʿAlid piety amongst Muslims in Java. Aḥmad b. ʿIsa al-Muhājir—the ancestor of Indonesian *sayyid*s—was born in Basra in 820 CE to the fourth son of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, but by the end of the century he had migrated to Ḥaḍramawt. To support their statement that al-Muhājir was a follower of Jaʿfarī *fiqh*, religious teachers at Yayasan Pesantren Islam (YAPI)—a Shiʿī school in Bangil, East Java—provided two lines of argument drawn from a Ḥaḍrami book published in the early 1900s under the title *Tarīkh Ḥaḍramawt*, which dedicated a chapter to *madhhab al-Muhājir fī-l-uṣūl waʾl-furūʿ*. Firstly, if the grandson of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq had changed *madhhab*, the anonymous author argued, this would have been discussed as a crucial turning point in the family's history; yet, there was no indication of such an event. Secondly, when al-Muhājir had arrived in Ḥaḍramawt, he was reported to have directly settled in the Shiʿī enclave, where he lived and died fighting against the Kharijites. The question then was why, if he were a Shāfiʿī, did he not settle in the Shāfiʿī area? Further, the story of another *sayyid* from Ḥaḍramawt (who remained unnamed) is transmitted focusing on his migration to Java as a consequence of his fighting against the Bāni Saʿūd in the 1920s, so as to strengthen his own Shiʿī background and that of the Arab community more broadly.

In the late 1880s, van den Berg observed that the eastern side of Java, especially the cities of Gresik and Bondowoso, had the fastest growing rate of Ḥaḍramī *sayyids*, and that their strongholds could be found in Central Java in the towns of Cirebon, Pekalongan and Semarang.[9] It is worth noting that it is in these same towns that the first nuclei of *ahl al-bayt* devotees emerged in the 1900s, and it is there that *sayyid*s have been the main engine behind the shaping of the Indonesian Ahlul Bayt community.[10]

Although the Shiʿa in East Java have argued that the first Shiʿī to have resided in the area was Ḥabīb Aḥmad Muḥdar (1861–1926), it is Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Habshi (1921–94, also spelled al-Habsyi) who stands as the main figure in the development of devotion for the *ahl al-bayt* amongst Ḥaḍramī *sayyid*s in this area.[11] Born in Surabaya, al-Habshi is said to have been attracted to Shiʿī Islam in his teenage years—an interest apparently further substantiated by his early links with Najaf *ʿulamāʾ* in the 1950s and 1960s, his leadership of the Arab Shiʿa Imāmīyya community in Java, and the regular commemorative gatherings held in his house for ʿĪd al-Ghādir and ʿĀshūrā. Al-Habshi considered his devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* an inherent characteristic of his being a descendant of ʿIsa al-Muhājir, and his furthering of Shiʿī doctrine and Jaʿfarī *fiqh* an aspect of the 'rediscovery' of his own roots. He is considered the spiritual leader of most Indonesian Shiʿīs who have studied in Shiʿa *pesantren*s (traditional religious schools), as his major activity was *daʿwa*.

Al-Habshi had already dedicated most of his time to those who sought his advice for over a decade before establishing his first school in Bondowoso, East Java, where Shiʿism was taught in unison and comparison with Sunni Islam. Since al-Habshi's move to Bangil, Shiʿī Islam has been propagated in Bondowoso by his descendants, who still lead the activities of the al-Sadiq Foundation (Yayasan al-Sadiq, first established in 1966) and the Pesantren al-Wafa (established in 1972).[12] Although the name of al-Habshi's school does not indicate any specific Shiʿī alignment, since its establishment in Bondowoso in 1973 YAPI has been a centre dedicated to the introduction of Shiʿism in the region. The school moved to Bangil in 1976, and the increasingly large number of pupils (*santri*) pushed al-Habshi to split it into two sites, along gender lines, in 1985. Today YAPI counts over 300 male and 200 female pupils, mostly originating from Shiʿī families settled in Java and across the archipelago, and it is currently the largest centre for the study of Shiʿism in Indonesia. This school is often preferred to other centres of religious education which also have a Shiʿī inclination, not just because of its comparative approach, but also because it runs the religious school together with the curriculum recognised by the Ministry of Education, thus allowing its pupils to attend university. Its role, then, is much broader, because while several of its alumni, whether or not they pursue further studies in Iran or elsewhere, tend to open religious foundations in their home regions, others often become active in university campuses, spreading Shiʿism in yet another segment of Indonesian society.

It is not clear when Shiʿī Islam was first openly taught at YAPI, but principles of Shiʿī ʿ*aqīda* (creed), *akhlāq* (ethics) and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) were

already discussed in a comparative manner in the first years of its establishment. With the advent of the Iranian Revolution, books begun to circulate more widely and, by the late 1980s, YAPI curricula were modelled to include the systematised teaching of Shiʿism. Today, all third-year students have to attend one semester of Sunnī *ʿaqīda* followed by one of Shiʿī *ʿaqīda*, and the same method is applied to *fiqh* classes. Philosophy and logic—*manṭiq*—has also been added, whereas the Sunnī tradition excludes this subject from the *pesantren* curriculum.

A fact difficult to ignore is that in proportion to the general ethnic distribution of the population, YAPI hosts a larger number of students of Arab descent, and this seems to reflect a more general trend in which elements of *ahl al-bayt* devotion have become more widely spread among Arabs than it is among the broader Indonesian Muslim population. Although there is an Arab predominance within the student body, the teachers themselves come from considerably more diverse backgrounds; the *fiqh* teacher, for example, is ethnically Chinese and is of Sunnī orientation. Another important element, which denotes YAPI's internal diversity and openness, is the educational background of its teachers.[13] Although YAPI has been the primary channel for Indonesians to be sent to study in Qum since the early 1970s, the connection between YAPI and Iran does not seem to be a factor in shaping *pesantren* activities; whereas this appears to be the case instead at Pesantren al-Hadi, in Pekalongan, as we shall see below.

Recasting Javanese heritage: cultural Shiʿī Islam

Traces of ʿAlid piety in indigenous expressions of Islam open another window on the panorama of religious rituality in the archipelago. Besides the *sayyids*, Javanese devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* point to the practice of *tahlīl*, the celebrations for Maulid Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet), and claim Persian origins for the *wali songo* (the 'nine saints' who, according to local traditions, Islamised the Indonesian archipelago),[14] to support their perception that a traditionalist 'version' of Indonesian Islam is heavily influenced by early contacts with Persia (the complexities of equating 'Persian' and 'Shiʿī' having already been discussed in previous chapters).[15] More specific references are made to inscriptions on gravestones, to a lullaby still common amongst Indonesian Ḥaḍramīs invoking the protection of the *ahl al-bayt*, and examples of *memaca*, a poetic and musical tradition translated from Arabic into Madurese commemorating the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn and performed in Bondowoso during the first ten days of Muḥarram.

Javanese devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* in the cities of Yogyakarta, Solo and Cirebon strongly hold to the notion that an old allegiance to Shiʿī Islam should be identified as the origin of several *kraton* traditions, most of which are linked to the month of Muḥarram which, in the Javanese calendar, is named Suro. Some of the rituals specifically connected to this Bulan Syuro or more commonly Suro (from the local rendering of ʿĀshūrā as Asyuro) are analysed in the next section; before doing so, I will draw a broader picture of how members of this community see themselves as directly belonging to a culturally Shiʿī enclave.

As a three-year-old boy, one night ʿArif looked up at the sky and thought he had seen a shadow on the full moon; in reply to his questioning, his older brother explained that what he had seen were the tombs of Imām ʿAlī and Imām Ḥusayn, which had been placed on the moon because earth 'could not bear their holiness'. ʿArif studied in a Shiʿī school in Central Java in the early 1990s, and has been the first to lead public *maʿtam* mourning session at ʿĀshūrā commemorations in the region. ʿArif's devotion to ʿAlī is pervasive and it seems to overshadow the doctrinal aspects of Shiʿism. To ʿArif, devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* is neither about doctrine, philosophy nor politics, but rather love for Imām ʿAlī, belief in his infallible capability to interpret the Qurʾan and the universality of his leadership. Recalling that ʿAlī's title is *amīr al-muʿminīn*—'leader of all believers'—ʿArif sees ʿAlī as a guide for all, and ʿAlid piety as a cornerstone of Javanese Islam. With a deep smile on his face, he states: '*Syia kultural, itu Islam Jawa*' ('Cultural Shiʿism, that is what Javanese Islam is').[16]

Herman Sinung Janutama (a Javanese man whose family is genealogically linked to the *kraton* in Yogyakarta) has dedicated most of his scholarly effort to shedding light on the connection between ʿAlid piety and *kraton* traditions. Identifying Herman's practice of Jaʿfarī jurisprudence is not an easy matter, as he would rather refer to those instances where cultural or family traditions overlap with *fiqh* requirements, such as his not eating *ikan lele* (catfish) and the Shiʿī prohibition against eating fish without scales. Referring to Peter Carey's observation that the reforms introduced by the colonial authority in response to Diponegoro's Java War (1825–30) constituted a watershed in Javanese history, culture and politics, Herman maintains that the disappearance of ʿAlid piety from *kraton* traditions was caused by the forced separation of political and Islamic education implemented by the Dutch in the 1800s.[17] As the figure of the *pangeran* as administrative-cum-religious head of the *kraton* was eliminated, a class of Javanese aristocrats (*priyayi*) formed in the

Dutch system were put in charge of the palace and *kiyai*s and *ʿulamā*' were sent away, thus leading to a 'purification' of *kraton* Islamic practices from traditional manifestations of ʿAlid piety. Yet, Herman argues, several of these practices were kept alive by members of the *kraton*, and although devoid of their original meaning, were transmitted to the younger generations until today.[18] One example of this was given to me by ʿArif; talking about his brother, he recalled how he would perform his daily prayers wearing a long-sleeved shirt on his shoulders to simulate the Shiʿī practice of praying with their arms along the body rather than folded on the bosom, as is customary among Sunnīs. Thus, ʿArif defined his brother as 'a member of the *Dipanegaraan*' (a follower of the way of Diponegoro) implying that this Javanese prince, and national hero, was a devotee of the *ahl al-bayt*.

To enable a better understanding of how some Javanese have built such awareness of ʿAlid piety traditions in their daily rituals, in the following paragraphs I illustrate the story of Java's Islamisation and its vestiges in contemporary Javanese devotion as retold to me by Herman. Here, as in the remainder of this discussion, it ought to be remembered that these are self-narratives, reconstructed histories rooted in a selection of recognisable elements of Java's established history arranged and crafted to serve the purpose of affirming the legitimacy of an alternative approach to practising Islam; a legitimacy which is increasingly questioned by mainstream Sunnī Islamic groups in Indonesia.

Following an undated tradition from the *Babad Tanah Jawa*, Herman argues that Islam was brought to Java in the eighth century by a certain Seh Subakir from Persia, and he suggests this should be read as Sayed Muḥammad al-Bāqir (*c*.677–732 CE), the son of Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (*c*.658–712 CE) and fifth *imām* of the Shiʿī tradition. Although Seh Subakir does not play any role in the modern Javanese Islamic tradition, Herman points to the fact that this Persian shaykh was still alive as a character of the *wayang* shadow puppet play at the time of Sultan Agung in the seventeenth century. This episode of the *Babad Tanah Jawa* moves the Islamisation of Java back by several centuries, and pushes Herman to conclude that henceforth, Ḥaḍramī Arabs are not the only descendants of the Prophet, but rather that the *silsila* of the majority of Javanese Muslims could be traced to Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, making them *sayyid*s too.[19] A later line through which the Javanese became part of the Prophet's family is identified in Shaykh Jumadil Kubra,[20] a descendant of Imām Ḥusayn and ancestor of Shaykh Maulana Maghribi, Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Gresik (d.1419), Sunan Kalijaga (1460-unknown) and Ki Ageng Siti Jenar (1426–1517).[21]

Maulana Maghribi, possibly one and the same with Malik Ibrahim, is also identified with the transmission of Ahlul Bayt traditions to Java; within this

tradition, the name Kalijaga is read as a Javanese adaptation of the expression *jaga Ali*, meaning 'the guardian of ʿAlī', with the Arabic letter ʿ*ayn* transformed in 'nga' first and 'k' then, thus resulting in '*k-ali*'. Ki Ageng Siti Jenar—also known as Shaykh Sayyid Abdul Jalil—is pointed to as a focal figure in the Javanese ʿAlid tradition, as the name Siti Jenar is read as the Javanese translation of *tanah merah*, the 'red/bloody land' of Karbalā'. Lastly, it is worth noting that in Java, Sunan Kudus (one of the *wali songo*) is also known as Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.[22]

'Traditional Shiʿīs' consider the tombs of these figures as places of *ziyāra* (visit) and regularly conduct praying sessions in these locations. It is interesting that the dates are chosen on the basis of the combination of the Javanese and Gregorian calendars, so every 'Monday *Kliwon*' (first of the five-day Javanese week), a *tahlīl* session is conducted at the tomb of Jumadil Kubra in Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta. Another place of *ziyāra* is the tomb of the younger brother of Raden Patah of Demak, the first Muslim king of Java. Although I could not find any confirmation of this in earlier documentary sources, Herman affirms that Raden Patah's 'nickname' was Raden Bagus Kasan, that is, Ḥasan, and his brother's, Raden Bagus Husayn. Diponegoro is also included in this chain of transmitters of ʿAlid piety. On the one hand the Javanese literary traditions have recollected, in the *Babad Dipanegara*, that Diponegoro had met with the Imām Mahdī. On the other hand Herman is proud to tell that after one of his visits to Diponegoro's grave, and having recited *tawassul* and *doʾa kumayl*, he had dreamt of Imām ʿAlī, and in this dream, ʿAlī was his own grandfather.[23]

As far as the *kraton* is concerned, Herman finds connections to *ahl al-bayt* devotionalism also in its architecture. In a recent publication, *Pisowanan Alit*, Herman points to the recurrence of the number five in the structure of the palace. The palace itself, for example, has five gates, each supposedly symbolising a member of the *ahl al-bayt*.[24] The *Wijilan* entrance is the only one with decorations, and this is said to be representative of Fāṭima. Explained in terms of recognised morphological shifts between the Javanese and Arabic languages, the *bunga padma* or lotus flower, which also has five petals, here stands for Fāṭima: *padma*, *patma*, *fatma*, Fāṭima.[25] The *Lirboyo* entrance, instead, represents Imām Ḥusayn, and in respect for his death it is said that no living sultan could pass through it. The story goes that when it happened that a sultan left the palace through that gate, his horse began to run erratically, jumped into the paddy field and died. Similarly, the sultan fell sick and also passed away within a short time.[26]

Bulan Suro traditions

There appear to be a number of *kraton* ritual traditions linked to the Bulan Suro, the Javanese equivalent of the first month of the Islamic calendar, Muḥarram. It should be noted that the Javanese name of this month neither carries the same name as the Islamic calendar nor a name of Javanese etymology, but rather a transformation of the Arabic word ʿ*ashara*, 'ten', or ʿĀshūrā, which indicates the tenth day of the month of Muḥarram. Furthermore, it has to be added that the tenth day of Muḥarram has been given specific importance also in Sunnī Islam as it is on this day that several of the prophets found salvation, among others Noah, Adam, Ibrahim and Yusuf. Hence Muḥarram becomes a ritually dense month within the Islamic tradition, being marked by the beginning of the New Year, the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn, and celebration for the salvation of the prophets. It is amidst this context that a selection of Bulan Suro traditions are examined below.

The day being calculated as starting at sunset, on the night preceding 1 Suro the *kraton*s of Solo and Yogyakarta carry out the washing of the *kraton* sacred heirlooms (the ceremony of *mandi pusaka*), followed by their parading through the city on the following day. At the end of this ceremony, water is distributed among the population as a vehicle of *baraka*, or blessing. This is interpreted by some Shiʿīs of both Arab and Javanese origins as symbolising Imām Ḥusayn's exit from his tent and approach to the battlefield, at Karbalā'.[27]

A second tradition, which would occur on 1 Suro, but which has not been performed in recent times, is the *acara sekaten*. This is a musical performance carried out with two sets of gamelan instruments, and it was described to me as marking a saddening event (*sesekeng hati*, from *sesak*, meaning 'oppressive' to the heart). However, an alternative understanding of *sekaten* is the Javanese adaptation of the Arabic *shahādatayn* ('the two professions of faith'), which refers to the ritual of converting to Islam. It is in connection with this interpretation of the word that in contemporary Java the only time of the year in which this ceremony is still performed is on the birthday of the Prophet, an occasion on which, historically, villagers would be introduced to Islam.[28] The gamelan then functions as musical background to the week-long city fair and final parade. Important celebrations and fairs become the physical space for the interplay of Islamic and local traditions, and a tinge of *ahl al-bayt* devotionalism is still evident today. It seems that on such occasions, especially in small centres, a common role-play is the *jatilan* (Arabic: *j-d-l* [*an*]), read as *main perang* or 'playing war', which represents the re-enactment of Imām Ḥusayn's battle in Karbalā' by the riding of paper horses and cracking of whips, with the gamelan

playing in the background.[29] The gamelan, puppet shadow play, and *wayang orang* are also used at the Cirebon *kraton*, where to commemorate ʿĀshūrā, the Mahabharata tale of Abimanyu is used to tell the tragedy of Karbalā'.[30]

An additional note should be made of the fact that in virtue of a rare combination of the Javanese and Islamic calendars, the first day of Muḥarram 1431 fell on a 'Friday Kliwon', which itself is a combination of days charged with particular meaning, as this is considered the day when the Javanese can appease and communicate with the spirits of the deceased, and thus special rituals are held. One of these special rituals is the practice of bathing in the river, known as *qum-qum* (*berendam*, 'bathe, soak in water'), which is performed at night during a full moon and facing the current, and is seen as a metaphor for 'becoming one' with Imām ʿAlī. This is identified as the result of three factors: first, the Javanese word for river is *kali*, hence ʿAlī if we follow the already explained Javanese adaptation of the letter ʿ*ayn*; second, ʿAlī in Java is also named *lautan ilmu* or 'sea of knowledge'; and lastly, the river per se is the physical representation of a *silsila*, which would reconnect oneself directly with ʿAlī.[31]

There are two more traditions linked to Muḥarram, which the 'traditional' Ahlul Bayt community has reinterpreted as vestiges of a past ʿAlid tradition in Java: fasting and the making of porridge (*bubur*). These, however, raise even more complex interpretative problems, and exemplify how these rituals' origins are being contested by various portions of the Ahlul Bayt community in Java.

The Bulan Suro is also commonly known by the Javanese population as a Bulan Sial, an 'unfortunate month'. In the context of 'traditional Shiʿīs', I have been told that especially during the first ten days of Muḥarram, devotees of the Ahlul Bayt adopt withdrawn behaviour, and open manifestations of sadness are matched with asceticism and the consumption of reduced amounts of food. In the more doctrine-oriented environment of Shiʿī schools, I have witnessed several discussions on the matter of fasting. Some maintain that it is *sunna* to fast on the second and third days, while others maintain that the fasting should be carried on for nine days, and on the tenth—the day of ʿĀshūrā—one should only limit the amount of food ingested (*imsak*) rather than fasting. At the other end of the spectrum of possibilities are those who affirm that it is not an Ahlul Bayt tradition to fast, but rather a Sunnī one; in this context, fasting is seen as a period of abstinence leading up to great celebrations for the salvation of the prophets.

The cooking of porridge on the evening of the ninth day of Muḥarram is a tradition present in several regions of the Indonesian archipelago, from Aceh

(*kanji acura*)[32] to Ternate (*bubur asyura*),[33] Makassar (*jeppe su'rang*)[34] and Java (*bubur merah-putih*). The porridge, being of two colours (white and red), is generally said to symbolise Ḥusayn's purity and blood. Once again, in Java, I have observed very different attitudes toward this tradition. The *bubur* is still prepared in the Solo *kraton*, although this occurs on the first day of the month instead of the ninth. At YAPI, where the general approach appears to be closer to that of the grassroots, *bubur* is frowned upon as a non-Shiʿī tradition, whilst members of the more Iran-oriented al-Hadi cook porridge on the ninth day. Further, at al-Hadi they reject the idea that this tradition has local roots and they define it as a tradition of the school itself. In fact, this *bubur* has nothing to do with what is commonly identified as the ʿĀshūrā porridge in Indonesia, being made with goat meat and various spices, with the red shade given by a chilli-based condiment, and no coconut milk.

A unique attempt to shed light on this mixture of Sunnī and Shiʿī tradition, and to reappropriate and reaffirm the Sunnī roots of both porridge and fasting, has been pursued by K. H. Afandi Ghazali (a preacher from West Java) in a sermon dedicated to Muḥarram. Ghazali points to Muḥarram and its tenth day as the best time for *sunna* fasting, only second to the obligatory one of Ramadan, and connects it to the prophetic tradition, *afḍalu al-ṣiyām baʿda ramaḍān shahru illahi al-muḥarram*. Referring to 'original' Islamic traditions in an unnamed Middle Eastern country, Ghazali illustrates these people's dedication to the Prophet and his family, and explains how Muḥarram has become the month in which speeches, the giving of alms and fasting are dedicated to mourning the death of the Prophet's grandchild. Maintaining his jocular style, Ghazali compares these commemorations to the celebrations on 17 August in Indonesia, on which occasion children dress up as militias without understanding the historical roots of this practice, i.e. the 1945 proclamation of independece from colonial rule. Similarly, the origins of Muḥarram traditions were forgotten, but people would still fast, give alms and 'remember the death of our lord Ḥusayn' by painting everything in red: their face, clothes, bread, houses. Then, Ghazali continued, Islam came to Indonesia, and the 'saints' used Muḥarram to attract people, disseminating the practice of fasting and giving alms. Porridge became the way through which village people could pool their resources together and obtain a larger amount of food; as the Prophet had said *ṣaumun yaumin ʿāshūrā* ('fast of the tenth day'), the porridge came to be known as *bubur suro*, the month as Bulan Suro, and anything else happening during that month also named after it. To much of Ghazali's frustration, because all these traditions were copying 'the way of the ancestors',

none of the villagers seemed to understand that *suro* simply meant 'ten', and thus, he concluded in his sermon: 'I say once again to Muslims that they should welcome Muḥarram! The fasting is *sunna*. The alms are *sunna*. The month is called Muḥarram. The Suro fasting should be called the fasting of the tenth of Muḥarram.'[35]

The paragraphs above have addressed a number of traditions expressly related to the month of Muḥarram, or Bulan Suro. Within the frame so far depicted, where *sayyid*s and *kraton*-linked Shiʿīs seek recognition of their belonging to the community of the devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* in different referents, the cooking and consumption of the *bubur suro* becomes exemplary. On the one hand, the *sayyids/pesantren* communities reject the idea that the porridge existed as a local 'Javanese' tradition; and on the other hand, those related to the *kraton* insist that the presence of *suro* porridge across the archipelago is the mark left by a long-forgotten influence of Shiʿism in the early dissemination of Islam. Ghazali, instead, attempted a re-appropriation of Suro/Muḥarram rituals as Sunnī, by connecting them to the prophetic traditions, which chronologically precede the formation of Shiʿism.

It is thus that the *sayyid*s capitalise on the exogenous origin of Shiʿism in the Indonesian archipelago by focusing on doctrine, and that the *kraton* people have dedicated their efforts to reinterpret local ritual traditions in a Shiʿa framework. The first one has developed to become the main engine behind the systematic spread of Shiʿī doctrine and jurisprudence in Java and beyond, while the second has kept a local focus to keep alive its rituality and origins. The stream flowing from YAPI, al-Hadi and other schools has had a much wider impact on the shaping of Ahlul Bayt communities in contemporary Indonesia; and thus, it provided the raw material needed to foster the interest already stirred by the Iranian Revolution. Unfortunately, it is this same trend which is now fostering a polemic of sectarianism in the country.

The conviction of the existence of a direct link between the Javanese people and the Prophet by way of Imām Ḥusayn, or Imām Ḥasan in the case of the Cirebon Sultanate, has very important consequences for the attitude of 'traditional Shiʿīs' toward Iran. They look with contempt on those Indonesians who 'disregard' this embedded connection to the *ahl al-bayt* in favour of an exogenously generated form of doctrinal Shiʿism. In addition, they also seem much concerned with Iran's intellectual expansion to Indonesia—a process which I have heard being compared to the Saudi-Wahhabi mission.

The impact of the Iranian Revolution: four life stories

In the 1980s, the Indonesian press reported the concerns of the government on the risk of the Iranian Revolution spreading new ideals, which could bring instability to the country.[36] However, what the regime failed to notice was that the most powerful consequence of the Revolution was the diffusion of literature on Irano-Persian history and philosophy, which mostly fed the brains of those dissatisfied with religion rather than with the political status quo. The previous sections have outlined the dynamics affecting devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* who recognised themselves as naturally belonging to the group by virtue of their descent. This section presents another path which led to the conversion of university students to Shiʿism in the 1980s.

To show the diverse background of the converts, the following paragraphs present the personal stories of how four men came to be in touch with Shiʿism, and how this reflected on the formation of the next generation of devotees in Java. These men are Sayyid Ahmad Baragbah from Pekalongan, who founded Pesantren al-Hadi in 1989; a *sayyid* from Solo, who founded the al-Wahda foundation in 1990; and two former leaders of IJABI in Yogyakarta, a Sundanese and a Makassarese. These four Indonesians have all approached Shiʿa teachings in the years following the Iranian Revolution; however, their paths toward ʿAlid devotion and Shiʿī doctrine started from different perspectives and had different outcomes.[37]

Sayyid Ahmad Baragbah

Sayyid Ahmad Baragbah was born in Pekalongan, and in the 1970s moved to Yogyakarta to study Arabic literature at the Gadjah Mada University. During his studies, he was offered a scholarship to go to Saudi Arabia. However, as first news of the Iranian Revolution reached Indonesia, he changed his destination to Qum as he wished to understand the foundations of its Islamic movement. Far from being attracted by the revolutionary message of Khomeini, Sayyid Ahmad was fascinated with the Shiʿa interpretation of history and post-prophetic leadership of the *umma*. Upon his first return to Pekalongan in 1984, Sayyid Ahmad begun to spread the Shiʿī message among the members of his family, distributing literature he had translated into Indonesian. Interestingly, from his relatives' accounts, it emerges that he refused to teach them Shiʿism, as he wanted them to understand and 'see for themselves' the truth of Shiʿī belief, history and jurisprudence. Soon, all his siblings, as well as his parents, had adopted Shiʿism. It is worth noting that this same

approach has been implemented by some of them toward their own children, who only approached Shiʿism in their late teens. The argument goes that Shiʿism being based on rationality, logic and, ultimately, ʿ*aql* (intellect), this can only be understood through dedicated study and cannot be forced upon another. Another consideration is the fear of stigmatisation, as throughout the 1980s Shiʿī Islam was seen by the Indonesian government as a deviation from the 'true path' of Islam.

By 1987, Sayyid Ahmad had concluded his studies in Qum and upon his return several of his acquaintances in Semarang and Pekalongan asked him to take their children as students in his house. Although this was not his primary intent, in 1989 al-Hadi was established as a centre of Shiʿī education, and the initial group of eight pupils soon swelled to reach a peak of about 150 pupils in 1992–3. Iranian influence has been a constant element at the al-Hadi *pesantren*. In addition to the key teachers in the school being Qum alumni—including the one female *ustadha*—the school's curriculum is also inspired by the Iranian one, except for a few adaptations dictated by the different levels of preparation of the students, and a drastic reduction in philosophy instruction.

The aim of al-Hadi is to bring its pupils to the level of admission of Iranian institutions; its staff and students also admire Lebanon's Ḥezbollāh, and participate in demonstrations for *yawm al-Quds*; 'al-Quds Day' is an occasion to demonstrate support for Palestinian independence. Dedication and support for Naṣrallah's group amongst the local constituency is manifested in multifarious ways. In addition to the display of Ḥezbollāh paraphernalia such as T-shirts, bracelets, flags etc., produced locally as well as imported (common among children and adults alike), prayers for the group's victory over Israel and its prosperity were hailed in one of the commemorative sessions I attended during Muḥarram 1431/December 2009.[38]

I have highlighted how, in the beginning, politics did not play a central role in Sayyid Ahmad's interest in Shiʿism. Yet, in more recent years, Ahmadīnejād's and Naṣrallah's efforts to oppose Zionism and American policies across the Muslim world, coupled with the increasing politicisation of Islam in Indonesia, made some segments of Ahlul Bayt communities more aware and supportive of Shiʿī political thought. Generally speaking, Naṣrallah's Ḥezbollāh is taken as a model of a successful Muslim civil society group, able to provide the whole population with the financial support and infrastructures that the government cannot offer.[39] The westward orientation of the *pesantren* community also emerges in their support for the *vilāyat-e muṭlaq-e faqīh*, the 'absolute guardianship of the jurist' theorised by Khomeini in the 1970s and

1980s. This political principle states that Shiʿī Muslims ought to be ruled by a single jurist until the Imām Mahdī returns from his *ghayba*, or absence. The detail which was pointed to me as crucial is that since the revolutionary government was formed, the Supreme Leader has always been a descendant of the Prophet; this is how support for the *vilāyat-e muṭlaq-e faqīh* has become a way through which Indonesian *sayyid*s assert their hierarchical superiority over the indigenous population, and reaffirm genealogical belonging to the *ahl al-bayt* as a key aspect of leadership.[40]

A Sayyid from Solo

The line that I draw between Arab and Javanese Ahlul Bayt communities provides a useful analytical frame for discussing these developments in broad terms. It needs to be clearly noted, however, that although ethnicity plays a pivotal role in drawing this line, the members of these groups have also defined their boundaries following a more sophisticated discourse of 'legitimising genealogies', and this *sayyid*'s unique perspective exemplifies how these categories cannot be held as universally valid: in fact, he drops the title as soon as he can and asks me to call him *Bapak* (lit. father, a respectful way of addressing an older man). Bapak, then, was born in Solo in the early 1930s, where he lived most of his life, but attended a few years of elementary school at the Rabitah al-Alawiyah in Cianjur (West Java). He learnt some Arabic there, but everything else he learnt was due to self-directed study. This included Shiʿī Islam, which he approached from the angle of theology and *ʿaqīda*, through books published in Lebanon, Iraq and mostly Iran, and which he found in Solo in the aftermath of the revolution.

Before converting to Shiʿism, Bapak had been exploring other religious traditions. Most of his disaffection for Sunnī Islam emerged from the inaccuracy of the *ʿilm al-ḥadīth*, and the idea—widespread among *sayyid*s of his generation—that descendants of Muḥammad had a privileged position in society. Bapak recalled his encounter with Shiʿism as liberating and enlightening, as he found answers to his doubts not only in its doctrine, but also in Muṭaharī's egalitarian approach to society. This *sayyid*'s position is thus quite unusual in the Indonesian panorama of the Arab Shiʿa. Not only did he not receive any formal education, he does not even hold high his descent, arguing that the veracity of a *silsila* is impossible to be proven today.

Yet he merges the two attitudes expounded in the previous sections, as on the one hand, he suggests that the *wali songo* were Persian Shiʿīs; and on the other hand, he argues that his family, descending from Ḥaḍramawt, have been

Shiʿa in their ʿ*aqīda* for centuries and were only hiding behind a veneer of Sunnī *fiqh*—a practice the Shiʿa call *taqiyya*. Notwithstanding his ideological distance from most Arab Shiʿīs in Java, three of his sons studied at YAPI in Bangil, two furthered their studies in Qum and have settled there with Iranian wives, and his only daughter married one of Sayyid Husayn al-Habshi's sons, proving the tight interwoven lines connecting Shiʿa communities.

Since the 1980s, his house, in the Arab neighbourhood of Solo, has been the centre of Ahlul Bayt rituals and a place for informal learning. In 1990, he established the Yayasan al-Wahda, mostly dedicated to the translation of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq's *khuṭba*s, the hosting of ritual prayers and the commemoration of Shiʿī recurrences. The name of his foundation is a token of his desire to see the Indonesian Ahlul Bayt community united, and it is on this path that he had initially participated in the creation of IJABI.[41]

Bapak is fully aware of the political underpinnings and impact of the Iranian Revolution, which not only defended the weak, but more importantly had a state system to implement. Yet, this was not the aspect which drew him to Shiʿism.[42] Similarly, amongst those who came to Shiʿism from a militant background, the political dimension did not seem to play a role in the conversion process. As the diffusion of printed material on the Islamic Revolution met with a wide network of Islamic organisations on university campuses on the one hand, and government suppression of information on the other, Shiʿī Islam became much discussed among members of Sunnī fundamentalist groups.

The Campus Circle

The first former leading member of the Yogyakarta IJABI branch whom I present here—let's call him Aḥmad—was introduced to the *usroh* movement in Bandung in the mid-1980s[43] when he was a high school student. There, he began to study the teachings of Ḥasan al-Bannā's Ikhwān al-Muslimīn. In recalling his path toward Shiʿism, Aḥmad underlines the dissatisfaction he felt toward the *usroh* movement's fixation with *takfīr* ('proclaiming someone *kāfir*, infidel'), and its dogmatic approach to authority and the fundamentals of Islam, an approach that allowed no room for debate and discussions. Aḥmad was not the only member of his *usroh* group who desired to abandon this embedded sectarianism, and as some of his peers took the path of secularism, he became interested in Shiʿism which, in the second half of the 1980s, was spreading in some cirlces in Bandung.[44] It is worth noting that in addition to the appeal of Shiʿī ethics and philosophy, Aḥmad and other university students initially decided to read Shiʿī books precisely because the government

had banned them, having declared this stream of Islam 'deviationist'.[45] As Umar Assegaf has pointed out, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, IJABI chairman, also came from a similar background as he was a training leader at the Salman mosque of the Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB, Bandung Technology Institute) and after a period of self-imposed exile to Australia, embraced religious pluralism and Shiʿism.[46] More interestingly even, in the past decade, he has been engaged in a debate with the *pesantren* community on the hierarchical relation between ethics and jurisprudence.[47]

A similar background is shared by Ṣādiq, the second former IJABI cadre I discuss here; these days his activities focus on the teaching of Muṭaharī and ʿAlī Sharīʿatī's philosophy to university students in Yogyakarta. Ṣādiq's interest in Shiʿism as a university student in Makassar shows the continuity in campus conversion dynamics through the 1990s. From a Nahdatul Ulama background, while at high school he had been pulled into a 'literalist' group, but within a couple of years his criticism of the doctrinal approach of the group met with the reading of Muṭaharī. It was not until a few years later that Ṣādiq realised that these ideas were linked to another stream of Islam, Shiʿism, which not only powerfully contested the political establishment, but also valued independent thought, religious openness and brotherhood, instead of sectarianism and *takfīr*.[48]

Sayyid Ahmad Baragbah went to Iran to understand the religious underpinnings of the revolution, seen as a movement pushing for social change, and soon after his arrival in Qum he became interested in doctrine and jurisprudence which, to this day, are the pillars of al-Hadi. Bapak, in Solo, was seeking 'theological truth', and he was mostly dedicated to explaining Shiʿī teachings to those interested in it. Lastly, Aḥmad and Ṣādiq were attracted by the intellectual engagement of Shiʿī philosophy and its culture of tolerance, hence their involvement in teaching philosophy and in the social configuration of Ahlul Bayt communities in the post-Suharto years. As the years passed, *fiqh* and rituality became increasingly important to all of them, yet the focus of their *daʿwa* activities seems to have been consistent with the factors that first drew them to Shiʿism. These figures who symbolise a much wider constituency became acquainted with Shiʿism as a consequence of its political achievement in Iran, yet they were attracted to it by its philosophy and ethics.

The Yayasan Rausyan Fikr[49]

I now turn to discussing a local educational institute, the Yayasan Rausyan Fikr, which first started its activities teaching Islamic philosophy and Sufism

in Makassar during Suharto's New Order in 1995, and soon after it opened a branch in Yogyakarta. Although its founder is openly Shiʿa, the activities and teachings of the foundation in both towns are not focused on religion, rituality or politics, but rather on philosophy.

Due to the very nature of Yogyakarta as a university town, the membership of Rausyan Fikr comprises mostly tertiary-education students from across the country. The membership tends to stay constant at about one hundred with quite a fast turnover, as graduates tend to move on to other cities, yet the organisation's circle counts almost 5,000 members. Rausyan Fikr's main activities include printing and selling relevant literature and holding monthly training sessions, during which new members—on average, between ten and fifteen students—are introduced to general concepts of philosophy and critical thinking, with particular attention dedicated to Mulla Saḍra, Muṭaharī and ʿAlī Sharīʿatī. Also, throughout the year, special seminars are held in cooperation with other institutions. In December 2009, for example, the 'end-of-year seminar' of the philosophy department of the National Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri, UIN) in Yogyakarta was organised by Rausyan Fikr in cooperation with the Islamic College Jakarta (IC) and gathered over 500 students.[50] The IC has a close connection to Rausyan Fikr as every year it offers scholarships to its members to pursue their philosophy studies in the capital city, and this collaboration seems to be going further as they have recently set up a *pesantren mahasiswa* ('religious school for university students'), with philosophy courses lasting one or two years. Moreover, they also publish the periodical *Mulla Shadra*, subtitled 'Journal of Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism' (*Jurnal Filsafat Islam dan Mistisisme*).

The course co-organised by Rausyan Fikr and the IC is open to everyone, and the programme is a way to spread the underpinnings of Shiʿism, as—according to the leaders of Rausyan Fikr—theology is best transmitted, explained and understood through philosophy and history. Yet, the juridical and political dimensions of Shiʿism are really not within the scope of its teaching. Not only does its founder believe that the *vilāyat-e faqīh* is inapplicable to Indonesia because of its social and geopolitical outlook, he also believes that Khomeini's strength lies in his philosophical and mystical works rather than his political theory.[51] Rausyan Fikr's open and inclusivist approach has been the target of vocal criticism from conservative Islamist groups; in November 2013 representatives of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Forum Umat Islam and Front Jihad Islam threatened to hold demonstrations to stop Muḥarram gatherings.[52] It is worth noting that clashes were

avoided as the Sultan stepped in to support Rausyan Fikr as a stand against intolerance and anti-democratic behaviour.[53]

While Rausyan Fikr is not an exclusive 'Shiʿī organisation', as it neither has a focus on, nor advocates the practice of Jaʿfarī jurisprudence, its premises are used for devotional gatherings. It is a safe estimate to say that a large proportion of its members are not involved in the ritual aspects of *ahl al-bayt* devotion; in fact, the weekly gatherings for *tawassul* prayers and *doʾa kumayl* are attended by a dozen members at the most. It is my impression that within Rausyan Fikr's membership we can observe a gradual approach to devotion. This starts with an interest in philosophy, then a shift to participation in major ritual events (Muḥarram and ʿĀshūrā commemorations), and only in some cases does it reach the point of regular attendance at weekly meetings. However limited, this current does exist in the organisation and it brings together individuals with very different backgrounds and interests, especially as Rausyan Fikr is the only active organisation in Yogyakarta that runs a steady programme of Shiʿī devotion of some sort.

Among the students I met and engaged with in discussions, several of those who attended Ahlul Bayt rituals were from Maluku, others were from Sulawesi (North and South alike), Sumatra and Java. What is most interesting are the striking differences amongst Rausyan Fikr members: some are from rural families, while others have parents who are state employees, university lecturers and small entrepreneurs. They have been members of Rausyan Fikr at different times, are enrolled at different campuses, and belong to several other student organisations, from the progressive Muslim Students' Organisation (Himpunan Muslimin Indonesian, HMI) to the more conservative Indonesian Muslim Students' Action Union (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, KAMMI), *daʿwa* and *tarbiyah* groups. The only recurrent element is their adherence to Jaʿfarī *fiqh* and self-definition as Shiʿī, leading one to think that *fiqh* is an important aspect of their lives, although the *yayasan* itself does not focus on this aspect. Also, in view of their *fiqh* and ritual background, no pattern has emerged. Some of the members who identified their families as Jaʿfarī started performing Ahlul Bayt rituals only after joining Rausyan Fikr, and this could be explained as the result of a double dynamic: that is, either the later conversion of their parents or the transformation of religious rituality into a social event. An element which will receive further attention in future research is that a large majority of the members coming from Northern Maluku had been commemorating Ahlul Bayt recurrences since childhood, although they were not conscious of the connection to Shiʿī devotionalism until they joined Rausyan Fikr.[54]

Ahlul Bayt rituals are not performed as part of the organisation's activities, but during Muḥarram the foundation hosts ritual prayers and organises and subsidises the journey to attend ʿĀshūrā commemorations. The ritual prayers for the first nine days of the month were attended (in 2009) by an average of twenty students, while on the trip to Semarang on 10 Muḥarram of the same year there were over fifty of them, arguably the majority of the active members of Rausyan Fikr. It seems that participation in these rituals as well as the seminars is an act of religious devotion, but more importantly a social event. Their behaviour is rather liberal and not comparable to that of *pesantren* pupils; this is not only because at Rausyan Fikr there is no segregation of the sexes, but rather because its members actively participate in the shaping of the rituals.

For example, at a ritual praying session during Muḥarram, students were invited to express at least once in the nine days their 'reflections' on the relevance of Imām Ḥusayn's martyrdom to the contemporary struggle of Shiʿīs in Indonesia. The teacher exhorted them not just to read passages of the chronology of Karbalāʾ, but to write poems, musical pieces or stage a performance; these are all means through which believers can mediate the sorrow and meaning of Karbalāʾ. They are taught not to accept the given conclusions, neither that of a book nor that of any *ustadh*, but rather to think that 'any conclusion is the opening of a new window' stimulating further thinking and discussions, as the martyrdom of Ḥusayn did not bring Shiʿī Islam to an end, but marked the beginning of a new era.[55]

Although the foundation is inclusive and does not take political positions, its close connection with the IC has important implications, as its director is chosen via Qum's *Jamiʿatul Muṣṭafa*, and its mother institution in London (Islamic College for Advanced Studies, ICAS) is funded by the Irshad Trust, an Iran-sponsored charity.[56] During the December 2009 seminar at UIN, for example, while participants were awaiting the arrival of the speakers, including the new director of Jakarta's IC (an Iranian philosophy graduate), they broadcasted a video showing images of the Iranian Revolution. In March 2010, IC and Rausyan Fikr held a meeting with Ayatollah Sayyid Muḥammad Khamene'i, brother of the current Supreme Leader Grand Ayatollah ʿAlī Khamene'i, once again at UIN Yogyakarta. Furthermore, several State Islamic Universities' libraries across the archipelago now feature an 'Iranian Corner', often located next to the 'Canadian Corner' and the 'American Corner', displaying new publications on Iran donated by the Embassy. In addition, in March 2010, UIN Yogyakarta together with the Mulla Shaḍra Association hosted a photo exhibition of Iranian Islamic architecture.[57]

These elements are not singled out to suggest that philosophy groups in Yogyakarta are vehicles for the spreading of Iran's political agenda. Rather, they point to the fact that as during the revolution—when Shiʿism reached Indonesia mostly through translation of intellectual works—Iran is today using similar channels to strengthen its connection to Indonesian Muslims. It is this trend, and that of *pesantren*s who look to Iran for inspiration and guidance, that Herman Simatupang criticises as it tends to obliterate what he sees as Java's deeper historical connections to Ahlul Bayt devotion.

Conclusion

This overview of Ahlul Bayt communities across Java reveals the diverse paths of conversion of community leaders to Shiʿī Islam. It also explains how these differences are reflected in their patterns of devotion and *daʿwa* techniques. As the teaching of Shiʿī doctrine, jurisprudence and philosophy in Indonesia has been pursued by very few *daʿi*s, in a limited number of schools and foundations, and only since the second half of the 1980s, it is today possible to see well-delineated streams of Ahlul Bayt devotion.

I have given much attention to the role played by the self-consciousness of being genealogically part of the *ahl al-bayt*, and how this approach grounded in self-narratives and reconstructed histories has contributed to the formation of separate subgroups within the Ahlul Bayt community in Java; it was not my intent to question or deconstruct the veracity of such narratives. At the same time, I have also highlighted the varying impact of the Iranian Revolution in attracting new acolytes. Amongst the first generation of Shiʿīs, the main difference has been identified as to whether they considered themselves as 'inherently' Shiʿī because of their (alleged) genealogical links to the *ahl al-bayt*, or whether they approached Shiʿism as the result of an interest in philosophy or doctrine. Within this perspective, the Iranian Revolution played the role of a stimulant for the diffusion of printed material, and did not come to be seen as a model to be emulated in the field of politics. I have shown how these two groups of Shiʿīs developed almost independently and formed different circles. The issues of descent, educational background and doctrinal/devotional priorities bore consequences for the following generations, thus becoming increasingly influential elements in the fragmentation of the congregation.

Being only a preliminary study, this chapter is far from providing a complete picture of the state of Java's diverse Ahlul Bayt communities, a field in constant transformation. However, from the data presented, two conclusions

emerge. First, since the Iranian Revolution, Ahlul Bayt devotion in Java has undergone a continuous process of reconfiguration and alignment with foreign models of Shiʿism as much as with local traditional patterns of ʿAlid piety, with the former gathering a much larger following by virtue of its expansionist character. Secondly, the steady increase in the number of 'lovers of the *ahl al-bayt*', and its increased presence in the public sphere, have contributed to the deepening of internal differences and preventing the formation of a unified community, as demonstrated by the organisational failure of IJABI. Considering the current narrowing of what religious authorities consider acceptable Islamic understanding (see the cases of Ahmadiyah and Madura's Shiʿīs, for example), it is important to be reminded of the multiple historical and social trajectories that contributed to the Islamisation of Indonesia in the past centuries to affirm the legitimate place of alternative Islamic paths as indigenous.

NOTES

1. DEBATING 'SHIʿISM' IN THE HISTORY OF MUSLIM SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. D. Saimina, A.R. Sirajuddin and Iqbal Abdurrauf, 'What's Here, Sir, is Potpourri Syi'ah', *Indonesia Reports Books and Bibliographic Supplement*, 19 (1986), 1–7; Werner Ende, 'Schiitische Tendenzen bei sunnitischen Sayyids aus Hadramaut: Muhammad b. ʿAqil al ʿAlawi (1863–1931)', *Der Islam*, 50 (1973), pp. 82–97.
2. For the purposes of this volume, we distinguish the broader realm of 'Alid piety and its diverse cultural manifestations from more specifically delineated Shiʿī sectarian identity by the latter's direct engagement with particularly marked ritual practice (for example, prayer performed with a clay tablet from Karbalā'), and/or identifiable theological or jurisprudential schools of Shiʿī thought (including, but not limited to issues of the imāmate and Jaʿfarī *fiqh*).
3. Marshall Hodgson, 'How did the Early Shiʿa Become Sectarian?' *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 75 (1955), p. 2.
4. Valerie J. Hoffman-Ladd, 'Devotion to the Prophet and His Family in Egyptian Sufism', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 24 (1992), pp. 615–37.
5. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shiʿi and Sunni Identities', *Modern Asian Studies*, 32 (1998), pp. 689–716.
6. William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra, containing an account of the government, laws, customs, and manners of the native inhabitants, with a description of the natural productions, and a relation of the ancient political state of that island* (3rd edn, London, 1811), p. 346.
7. A concise overview of earlier observations on this subject can be found in Baroroh Baried, 'Le Shiʿisme en Indonesia', *Archipel*, 15 (1978), pp. 65–84 (trans. Christian Pelras).
8. At the same time, local scholars working within Southeast Asia also began to develop their own models of an earlier Shiʿī period and subsequent Sunnī 'correction', which have gained significant popularity within the region, particularly since the 1960s. In many cases, such interpretations of the Islamisation of the region have closely tracked the development of major trends of Islamic reformism and nationalist ideology in Indonesia and Malaysia.
9. Paul Ravaisse, 'Deux Inscriptions Coufiques du Campa', *Journal Asiatique*, 20 (1922), pp. 247–89.
10. S. Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia* (Singapore, 1963), pp. 47–51.

11. In fact, he contends that one of the stones may date from considerably later (thirteenth century) and that the other is actually not from Champa at all, but rather of North African provenance. See Ludvik Kalus, 'Réinterprétation des plus anciennes stèles funéraires islamiques nousantariennes: I. Les deux inscriptions du « Champa »', *Archipel*, 66 (2003), pp. 63–90.
12. Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, 'La Jérusalem javanaise et sa mosquée al-Aqsā. Texte de fondation de la mosquée de Kudus daté 956/1549', *Archipel*, 63 (2002), pp. 27–56.
13. Brian E. Colless, 'Persian Merchants and Missionaries in Medieval Malaya', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, 42 (1969), pp. 11–14, 44–6.
14. Claude Guillot and Kalus Ludvik, *Les Monuments Funeraires et L'Histoire Du Sultanat de Pasai a Sumatra* (Paris, 2008), pp. 255–7, 298–302 (UB01, TSA18, TSA21). The first two of these stones with Persian inscriptions have also been discussed in a previous studies, including: H. K. J. Cowan, 'A Persian Inscription in North Sumatra', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 80 (1940), pp. 15–21; and Elizabeth Lambourn, 'The Formation of the *Batu Aceh* Tradition in Fifteenth-century Samudera-Pasai', *Indonesian and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 211–48. It is also worth noting that another tombstone from Pasai makes reference to the *ahl al-bayt*, yet this inscription is in Arabic (in Guillot and Kalus's catalogue it is stone PN01).
15. Saʿdi's verse is also quoted in the Malay text of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya* (Brakel).
16. This was, however, not the famous Ḥanbalī scholar ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad Abu'l-Farāsh (d.1200) b. al-Jawzī, but more likely his grandson Shams al-Dīn Abū'l-Muẓaffar Yūsuf b. Kizoghlu 'Sibṭ' Ibn al-Jawzī (d.1256), who is known to have been a Sunni of the Ḥanafī *madhhab*. For more on him, see Cahen, Claude 'Ibn al-Djawzī, Shams al-Dīn Abū'l-Muẓaffar Yūsuf b. Kizoghlu, known as Sibṭ', *EI2*, Brill Online, 2012: http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ibn-al-djawzi-shams-al-din-abu-l-muzaffar-yusuf-b-kizoghlu-known-as-sibt-SIM_3140 (accessed 2 August 2012).
17. Davis, R. 'Saʿdī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Musharrif al-Dīn b. Muṣlih Saʿdī, known as Shaykh Saʿdi', *EI2*, Brill Online, 2012: http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/sadi-SIM_6416 (accessed 2 August 2012).
18. E. Lambourn, 'From Cambay to Samudera-Pasai and Gresik: The Export of Gujarati Grave Memorials to Sumatra and Java in the Fifteenth Century CE', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 31 (2003), pp. 221–89.
19. G. E. Marrison, 'Persian Influences in Malay Life', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 28 (1955), pp. 52–69.
20. Colless, 'Persian Merchants', p. 44. For a more extensive overview of Portuguese observations on Persian Muslims in the region during that period, see Luis Filipe F. R. Thomaz, 'La présence iranienne autour de l'océan Indien au XVIe siècle d'après les sources portugaises de l'époque', *Archipel*, 68 (2004), pp. 59–158.
21. Maria Suntelny, *Timurids in Transition* (Leiden, 2007), p. 62.
22. Vladimir Braginsky, 'Jalinan dan khazanah kutipan; Terjemahan dari bahasa Parsi dalam kesusastraan Melayu, khususnya yang berkaitan denan 'cerita-cerita Parsi', in Henri Chambert-Loir, ed., *Sadur: Sejarah terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia* (Jakarta, 2009), pp. 59–117.
23. For a recent study of its adaptation into the Maranao language and the place that this text has taken in the transmission of select aspects of Islamic knowledge in the history of the twentieth-century Philippines, see Kawashima Midori, 'Baraperangan: A Commentary with

Excerpts', in Kawashima Midori, ed., *A Catalogue of the Maisie van Vactor Collection of Maranao Materials in the Arabic Script at the Gowing Memorial Research Center* (Tokyo, 2011), pp. 65–86.

24. A critical edition of the Malay text, together with extensive critical apparatus, can be found in L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah: A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance*, vol. 12, Bibliotheca Indonesica (The Hague, 1975). Brakel also published a full English translation of the text, together with notes and other addenda including selections of a Latin script Acehnese version, in *The Story of Muhammad Hanafiyya: A Medieval Muslim Romance, translated from the Malay*, vol. 16, Bibliotheca Indonesica (The Hague, 1977).
25. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*, pp. 55–62.
26. Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements? 'Ali and Fatimah in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), p. 106; Edwin Wieringa, 'Taming a Text: The Incorporation of the Shi'itic Hero Muhammad Hanafiyyah in a Sundanese Version of the Prophetic Tales', in Lokesh Chandra, ed., *Society and Culture of Southeast Asia: Continuities and Changes* (New Delhi, 2000), p. 355.
27. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*, p. 59.
28. Guillot and Kalus, *Monuments funéraires*, pp. 29, 124–6.
29. Ronit Ricci, 'Islamic Literary Networks in South and Southeast Asia', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 21 (2010), pp. 1–28.
30. Braginsky, for example, has demonstrated how the fifteenth-century Persian text of Aṭā' Allāh Faẓlullah Jamāl al-Ḥusaynī's *Rauzat al-Ahbab* was translated into Arabic at the court of the Acehnese *sulṭāna* Safiatuddin (1641–1675) before being adapted into Malay as the *Hikayat Nur* ('Jalinan dan khazanah kutipan').
31. Denys Lombard, 'The Indian World as Seen from Acheh in the Seventeenth Century', in Om Prakash and Denys Lombard, eds., *Commerce and Culture in the Bay of Bengal, 1500–1800* (New Delhi, 1999), p. 139.
32. Kathryn Babayan, 'The Safavid Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism', *Iranian Studies*, 27 (1994), pp. 136–61.
33. See, for example, Leonard Y. Andaya, 'Ayutthaya and the Persian and Indian Muslim Connection', in Kennon Breazeale, ed., *From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia* (Bangkok, 1999), pp. 119–36; and David K. Wyatt, 'Review Article: A Persian Mission to Siam in the Region of King Narai', *Journal of the Siam Society*, 62 (1974), pp. 151–7.
34. See Theodore G. Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java* (The Hague, 1967), vol. 1, p. 274; and Hermansyah, *Ilmu Gaib di Kalimantan Barat* (Jakarta, 2010), pp. 62, 106.
35. Wendy Mukherjee, '*Nabi Wadon*: A Book of Women from Java's North Coast', in Zaiton Ajamain and Nurasian Ahmad, eds., *Kesusasteraan Tradisional Asia Tenggara* (Kuala Lumpur, 2005), pp. 289–305.
36. Vladimir Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel: The Synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a Corpus of Mystical Texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 141–75.
37. Makam I, Siti Maimunah, Makam II Siti Salamah, Makam III Siti Khadijah, and also of Maryam, Makam IV Siti Aisyah (Braginsky, 'Science of Women', pp. 154–6).
38. *Syair Bahr an-Nisa*, cit. Braginsky, 'Science of Women', pp. 147–50.
39. Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, CA, 2006).

40. Werner Ende, 'Schiitische Tendenzen bei sunnitischen Sayyids aus Hadramaut'; and Farid Alatas, 'The *Tariqat al-Alawiyyah* and the Emergence of the Shiʿi school in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Oriente Moderno*, 18 (1999), pp. 323–39.
41. Ulrike Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut: Reforming the Homeland* (Leiden and Boston, 2003), pp. 187–287.
42. For one example of this from the eastern part of the Indonesian archipelago, see Smith Alhadar, 'Sejarah dan Tradisi Syiʿah Ternate', *al-Huda*, 1 (2000), pp. 90–100.
43. Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiʿis in Indonesia* (PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2009), pp. 37–47.
44. 'Syiah, Kalau-kalau Datang', *Tempo* (17 March 1984).
45. In this, our work complements that of the project led by Morimoto Kazuo (including Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, who is also a contributor to this volume), which documents broad traditions of reverence for the Prophet's family, including their latter-day descendants, in many parts of the world. See Morimoto Kazuo, ed., *Sayyids and Sharifs in Mulsim Societies: The Living Links to the Prophet* (Routledge, 2012).

2. SHIʿA DEVOTION TO THE *AHL AL-BAYT* IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. See Kazuo Morimoto, 'Toward the Formation of Sayyido-Sharifology: Questioning Accepted Facts', *Journal of Sophian Asian Studies*, 22 (2004), pp. 87–103; Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti and Laura Bottini, eds., *The Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf in Muslim History and Civilization/Il Ruolo dei Sādāt/Ashrāf Nella Storia e Civilta' Islamiche* (Proceedings of the International Colloquium/Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Rome, 2–4 March 1998), *Oriente Moderno*, 18, 79 (1999), pp. 284–659. More work along these lines is forthcoming in Kazuo Morimoto, ed., *The Role and Position of Sayyid/Sharifs in Muslim Society* (Proceedings of an International Conference, Tokyo, 22–23 September 2009), which contains material on ʿAlids in Southeast Asia and the ʿAlid relationship with Sufism.
2. See, for example, Ashirbek Muminov, Devin deWeese, Anke von Kügelgen and Michael Kemper, eds., *Islamization and Sacred Lineages in Central Asia: The Legacy of Ishaq Bab in Narrative and Genealogical Traditions* (Almaty–Bern–Tashkent–Bloomington, 2008), pp. 6–39; this reference is in Russian, but with a 'Foreword' in English by M. Kemper and A. von Kügelgen.
3. The bibliography quoted in some pioneer articles shows how little this has been researched: see Syed Farid Alatas, 'The Ṭarīqat al-ʿAlawiyya and the Emergence of the Shiʿī School in Indonesia and Malaysia', in *The Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf in Muslim History and Civilization* (Rome, 1999), pp. 323–39; Gilbert Hamonic, 'La fête du grand Maulid à Cikoang. Regard sur une tarekat dite 'shīʾite' en Pays Makassar', *Archipel*, 29 (1985), pp. 175–89; Baroroh Baried, 'Le Shiʿisme en Indonésie', *Archipel*, 15 (1978), pp. 65–84.
4. Regarding one of the first coherent presentations of such literature by Shiʿi authors, see Kazuo Morimoto, 'The Formation and Development of the Science of Talibid Genealogies in the 10th and 11th Century Middle East', in Bottini, ed., *Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf*, pp. 541–70.
5. However, we have to acknowledge the impressive effort made, in Qum, by the staff of the Kitābkhāna-yi Marʿashī, both in the field of producing revised editions of already published genealogical texts with specific attention to those concerning the *ahl al-bayt*, and in making available to scholars new manuscript sources. It is not by chance that the founder of the institute was the great ʿAlid *nassāb*, Marʿashī; see al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Marʿashī al-Najafī, 'L'Ayat

Allāh al-'Uẓmā al-Marʿashī al-Najafī, massimo genealogista contemporaneo. Una panoramica degli studi di '*ilm al-nasab*', in Bottini, ed., *The Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf in Muslim History and Civilization*, pp. 513–19.

6. See Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'The Migration of the *ahl al-bayt* to Bukhara in Genealogies' Books: Preliminary Remarks', in Chiara Silvi Antonini and D. K. Mirzaakhmedov, eds., *Ancient and Medieval Culture of the Bukhara Oasis* (Uzbekistan–Rome, 2006), pp. 74–85.
7. In the above-mentioned Tokyo conference, I put forward the suggestion of a *Historical Atlas* dedicated to the ʿAlids, and made a call for contributions.
8. The cult of the graves is certainly the most important devotional manifestation of *ziyāra*, but not the only one. It is interesting to see where it leads, for example, in the traditions dedicated to the role of birds in Imāmī thought, recently studied by Khalid Sindawi: 'The Role of Birds in Shīʿī Thought', in Antonella Ghersetti, ed., *Luoghi e Immaginario nella Letteratura Araba*, *Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, 3 (2008), pp. 165–81.
9. A good example of the awareness of 'being distinctive' is the endogamy practised by the ʿAlids, which disregards, at least during the Middle Ages, the fact of being Shiʿī or Sunnī, Ḥasanī or Ḥusaynī, and often ʿAlid or Ṭālibī; see Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Women's Names in Early Islamic Pro-Shiʿite Texts on the Genealogy of the Talibiyyin', *Medieval Prosopography: History and Collective Biography—Special Issue: Arab-Islamic Medieval Culture*, 23 (2002), pp. 141–65, esp. pp. 161–2; al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Qummī claims that in Qum, the women who descend from the eighth *imām* are unmarried for lack of *hamkofu*, that is, ʿAlids; see al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Qummī, *Taʿrīkh-i Qum* (Qum, 2006), p. 599. Pointing out what such a topic implies, see Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti and Raffaele Mauriello, 'Prestige Généalogique et Politique Matrimoniale chez l'*ahl al-bayt*: Status Quaestionis', in Teresa Bernheimer and Helena de Felipe, eds., *Religious and Political Uses of Genealogies in Islamic Society* (Edinburgh, forthcoming).
10. In Persian local histories, the anecdote of a poor ʿAlid woman who arrives somewhere, alone or with her children, but with nobody welcoming her, is almost a cliché: one of the imams will appear in the dreams of the leader of the community to rebuke him, in a particularly bitter way if there is a Shiʿi community, for not caring for the welfare of a descendant of the Prophet.
11. A good example is the misbehaviour of the representative of the caliph in Medina against an ʿAlid charged with drinking wine, which is allegedly the reason for the Fakhkh's revolt (169/786); see Abū'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-ṭālibiyyin* (Cairo, 1949), pp. 442 ff.
12. There is, however, no need to insist on the assimilation of piety for the ʿAlids within the cult for the *awliyāʾ* ('saints'), especially at a popular level, where the Shiʿa are a minority or virtually non-existent, as in the Maghreb Sidi ʿAlī Schlaf, in his preface to *Les Chorfa. Les Nobles du Monde Musulman* (Paris, 1995), a new edition and French translation of the Arabic work, *Kitāb silsila al-uṣūl fī shajarat abnāʾ al-Rasūl* (Tunis, 1347/1929), which was written by his father, the Algerian Sufi Mālikī *qāḍī*, Shaykh Sīdī ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Shārif b. Sīdī ʿAlī, declares his objective: to celebrate his father and to prove that the majority of the clans who struggled against French colonialism under 'Abd al-Qādir were descendants of the Prophet. In fact, '*le prestige de la lignée de Fatima a survécu jusqu'à l'époque moderne en Afrique du Nord et la croyance en l'efficacité mystique de la baraka est profondément enracinée dans l'esprit de nos peuples. À une époque où notre peuple cherche à retrouver ses racines [...] ne peut que être fier de ses origines qui remontent d'un côté, aux peuples berbères qui ont été les Ansar*

des descendants du Prophète et de l'autre, aux enfants de Fatima qui leur ont apporté l'islam, l'ont emplanté et lui ont donné une dimension spirituelle qui a fait que cette religion est aujourd'hui plus vivace dans ces pays que dans son propre berceau' (p. 10). The Maghreb is not the only case, as Central Asia, India and Africa can also be signficant examples. See, for example, Devin DeWeese, 'The Descendants of Sayyid Ata and the Rank of Naqīb in Central Asia', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 115 (1995), pp. 612–34. Where Africa is concerned, see, for example, in relation to Somalia and some interpretations of 'sainthood', Joan M. Lewis, 'Saints in North Africa Islam', in Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, ed., *Islam in East Africa: New Sources (Archives, Manuscripts and Written Historical Sources. Oral History. Archaeology)* (Rome, 2001), pp. 227–40, esp. p. 234 and p. 237; and Jean-Claude Penrad, 'La Shādhiliyya Yashrūṭiyya et la 'Alawiyya dans l'Océan Indien Occidental: nouveaux matériaux comoriens', in Amoretti, ed., *Islam in East Africa*, pp. 253–74, esp. p. 265. See also, among the many publications on India, Arthur Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet. The Indian Naqshbandiyya and the Rise of the Mediating Sufi Shaykhs* (South Carolina, 1998).

13. See Abdelahad Sebti, 'Chérifisme, symbole et histoire', in Bottini, ed., *The Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf in Muslim History*, pp. 621–38.
14. E. Lévi-Provençal, 'La Fondation de Fès', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientale d'Alger*, 4 (1938), pp. 23–52; Maya Shatzmiller, *L'historiographie mérinide. Ibn Khaldūn et ses contemporains* (Leiden, 1982); Halima Ferhat, 'Chérifisme et enjeux du pouvoir au Maroc', in Bottini, ed., *The Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf in Muslim History*, pp. 473–81, esp. pp. 475–7.
15. The model, which incidentally is followed also by the Umayyads, can be the one of al-Husayn b. ʿAlī, who is said to have married a Sasanian princess, and so could claim a double nobility.
16. Herman L. Beck, *L'image de Idris II, ses descendants de Fās et la politique chérifienne des sultans mérinides* (Leyden, 1989). See also Giovanna Calasso, 'Arabi e Berberi nel 'Rawḍ al-Qirṭās' di Ibn Abī Zarʿ: ancora sulle origini di Fes', *Egitto e Vicino Oriente*, 6 (1983), pp. 333–50, with a rich bibliography, where, on p. 335, quoting al-Jaznā'ī, *Kitāb zahrat al-Fās* (Alger, 1923), he points out that the body of Idrīs I was discovered in his grave as early as 1318–19, indicating that the most popular version of such an event, dated 1437 and related to Idrīs II, was most likely a reflection of this tradition of pious narrative.
17. AA.VV., *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, nouvelle édition, XI (Leiden, 2005), pp. 567–83; see, in particular, the entries of J. W. Meri, pp. 567–70, and Abdelaziz Sachedina, pp. 576–7.
18. See Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Najāshī (d.450/1058–9), *Kitāb al-Rijāl* ([Tehran], not dated), pp. 26–8.
19. For a good demonstration, consider how Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. between 737 and 742) was considered a trustworthy authority on the traditions of the Prophet also outside Shiʿi circles; see Arzina R. Lalani, *Early Shiʿī Thought: The Teachings of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir* (London, 2000) pp. 96–100.
20. Hārūn's policy in Persia and Shiʿi reaction are well summarised by Edmund C. Bosworth, 'Hārun al-Ras(h)id', in Ehsan Yarshater, ed., *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York, 2003), vol. 12, pp. 17–20.
21. It could be of some interest to verify what we know about the Fatimid Court ceremonials, or even from the ceremony of the Ismaili *dīdār-i imām*, as it is performed today.
22. Laura Bottini, *Poteri paralleli nell'Islam del terzo secolo dell'Egira. Trasmissione del Califfato/imamato: regole successorie, concezione dell'autorita' e apparato istituzionale* (PhD thesis, University of Rome 'La Sapienza', 1996), pp. 116–24; see also Etan Kohlberg, 'Imam and Com-

munity in the Pre-Ghayba Period', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 10 (1987), pp. 128–66, esp. p. 40.

23. In fact, the shorter *ghayba*, namely the period without imām but with somebody who was able to be in touch with him as his spokesman (the four *safīr*), was over in 941.
24. Ibn Bābawayhi devotes chapters 65, and 67–70 to this subject. Chapter 66 includes a report transmitted from ʿAlī al-Riḍā on the merits of the visit to the grave of his sister, Faṭima, in Qum. The history of the shrine of ʿAlī al-Riḍā himself highlights the changing views on Shiʿi traditions of *ziyārāt* over the centuries. A.-Ḥ. Mawlawī, M. T. Moṣṭafawī, and E. S(h) akūrzāda, 'Āstān-e Qods-e Raᵃawī', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 2, pp. 826–37.
25. In fact, this is the case when the descendants of al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī are at stake, in Abū Naṣr al-Bukhārī, a *nassāb* of the tenth century; see Abū Naṣr al-Bukhārī, *Sirr al-silsila al-ʿAlawiyya* (Najaf, 1383/1963), pp. 4–29.
26. See Leonardo Capezzone, 'Il Kitāb al-Ṣirāṭ attribuito a Mufaḍḍal ibn ʿUmar al-Juʿfī', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 69 (1995), pp. 295–312.
27. See Wilfred Madelung, 'The ʿAlid Rulers of Ṭabaristān, Daylamān and Gīlān', in *Atti del 30. Congresso di Studi Arabi e Islamici* (Ravello, 1967), pp. 483–92; Wilfred Madelung, 'Abū Isḥāq al-Ṣābī on the ʿAlids of Ṭabaristān and Gīlān', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 26 (1967), pp. 17–57; on the ʿAlid presence in these regions, see Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Definire il "centro". Qualche osservazione sul possibile ruolo dell'*ahl al-bayt*', in Giuseppe Contu, ed., *Proceedings of the 23rd Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Sassari, 29 Septembre–1er Octobre 2006* (forthcoming).
28. I consulted the edition printed in 1371/1952, pp. 642–4; see Jean Calmard, 'Le Chiisme Imamite en Iran à l'époque seldjoukide, d'après le *Kitāb al-Naqḍ*', *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam*, 1 (1971), pp. 43–67.
29. Even in relation to Persian cities like Qum or Kāshān, which are recognised as Imami strongholds, we can question whether the term 'community' is really appropriate; see Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'L'Imamismo in Iran in epoca selgiucchide: a proposito del problema della "comunita"', in Gianroberto Scarcia, ed., *La Bisaccia dello Shaykh. Omaggio ad Alessandro Bausani Islamista nel Sessantesimo Compleanno* (Venice, 1981), pp. 127–39.
30. Significantly, he is considered, like his brother al-Raḍī, among the possible authors of *Nahj al-balāgha*.
31. In al-Sharīf al-Raḍī's *Khaṣāʾiṣ amīr al-muʾminīn* (Mashhad, 1406/1986), p. 40, the editor mentions the merits of the pilgrimage to his grave as a taken-for-granted fact.
32. Some scholars maintain that the Shiʿī cult of Muḥarram is their most striking mark of identity; and that the Shiʿīs most frequent request to the ruling power is to practise these commemorations in public, as a less ambiguous sign of their acceptance as a legitimate minority. Mahmoud Ayoub, 'Ashūrā', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 2, pp. 874–6, esp. p. 875.
33. The best reference on the topic is still Marijan Molé, 'Les Kubrawiya entre Sunnisme et Shiisme au huitième et neuvième siècles de l'Hégire', *Revue des Etudes Islamiques*, 29 (1961), pp. 61–142. See also Kamil M. al-Shaybi, *Sufism and Shiʿism* (Surbiton, 1991), pp. 109–306, where the author provides a survey of the relations between Sufism and Shiʿa in all of the Islamic world, which is particularly useful for the period under study.
34. See Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, *Monuments funéraires et l'histoire du Sultanat de Pasai à Sumatra, XIIIe-XVIe siècles* (Paris, 2008), pp. 95–135.
35. It is not a unique case that is presented by Jean Aubin, 'Deux Sayyids de Bam au XVe siècle.

Contribution à l'histoire de l'Iran Timouride', *Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozial Wissentschaftlichen Klasse*, 7 (1956), pp. 375–501.

36. See Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Di *Ansāb* e d'altro: Due osservazioni a margine', *Oriente Moderno*, *La civiltá timuride come fenomeno internazionale*, 2 (1996), pp. 33–43; this special issue is edited by Michele Bernardini.
37. See Riccardo Zipoli, 'L'ospite di Bukhara a Mashhad', in *Problemi dell'età timuride* (Venice, 1980), pp. 27–41.
38. In reality, this is not the first one. In 2009, The Institute of Ismaili Studies and the Written Heritage Research Center published in Tehran an epic poem in the metre of the *Shâhnâmah*. The title is *ʿAlīnāmah* (An Ancient Story in Verse) narrating the battles of Jamal (656) and Siffin (657). It is not an edited version, but rather an actual facsimile of manuscript n. 2562 kept at Qowniah Museum (Turkey) and which had been copied in the seventh century AH. The *ʿAlīnāmah*, according to Muhammad Reza Shafiʿi Kadkani and Mahmud Omidsalar (who have written the Introduction), was written in 482/1089 by an anonymous poet nicknamed Rabiʿ.
39. See Giovanna Calasso, 'il Xāvar-nāmè di Ebn Ḥosām', *Memoria dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, s. VIII, XXIII (1979), pp. 381–540; Giovanna Calasso, 'Una testimonianza letteraria della 'provincia' timuride: Il Xāvar-nāmè di Ebn Ḥosām', in *Problemi dell'età timuride*, pp. 133–47. More inclined to consider the Khāvar-nāmah as an example of the popularisation of Shiʿa is Charles Melville, 'Ibn Ḥusām's Hāvarān-nāma and the Šāh-nāma of Firdausī', in Michele Bernardini, Masashi Haneda and Maria Szuppe, eds., *Liber Amicorum: Études sur l'Iran médiéval et moderne offertes à Jean Calmard*, 1–2 (2006), pp. 219–34.
40. See Abbas Amanat, '*Meadows of Martyrs*: Kāshifī's Persianisation of the Shiʿi Martyrdom Narrative in the Late Timūrid Hera', in Farhad Daftary and Josef W. Meri, eds., *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honour of Wilferd Madelung* (London, 2003), pp. 250–75; Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Note in margine alla *Rauḍat as-shuhadā*' di Vāʿiẓ Kāshifī', in *Problemi dell'età timuride*, pp. 17–26; Giorgio Rota, 'Vāṣefi e i suoi tempi: uno sguardo alle *Badāye' O'l-Vaqāye"*, *La civiltá timuride come fenomeno internazionale*, 2 (1996), pp. 139–64.
41. See Aubin, 'Deux Sayyids de Bam au XVe Siècle', p. 442.
42. Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Ricognizioni islamiche 1973 nell'Iran meridionale', *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli*, 25 (1975), pp. 347–55.
43. Similar questions arise with one of the oldest surviving mosque inscriptions in Southeast Asia, that of the 1549 Arabic foundation inscription of the mosque of Kudus (Central Java), mentioned by Michael Feener and Chiara Formichi in the introductory essay to this volume. For the inscription itself, see Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, 'La Jérusalem javanaise et sa mosquée al-Aqsā. Texte de fondation de la mosquée de Kudus daté 956/1549', *Archipel*, 63 (2002), pp. 27–56.
44. The bibliography that I cite here is unavoidably very selective: Jaʿfariyān, *Rasūl, Dīn va siyāsat dar dawra-yi Ṣafawī* (Qum, 1370/1991); and Andrew J. Newman, ed., *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period* (Leiden, 2003).
45. The authority on this issue is Jean Calmard, 'Moharram Ceremonies and Diplomacy (A Preliminary Study)', in C. Hillenbrand and C. E. Bosworth, eds., *Qajar Iran* (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 213–28; Calmard, 'The Consolidation of Safavid Shiʿism: Folklore and Popular Religion', *Pembroke Papers*, 4 (1996), pp. 139–90; Calmard, 'Les rituels shiites et le pouvoir.

L'imposition du shiisme safavide: eulogies et malédictions canoniques', *Etudes Safavides*, 39 (1993) pp. 109–50—special issue edited by Jean Calmard, which is a collection of the papers presented to the colloquium held in Tehran in 1993; Jean Calmard, 'Le mécénat des représentations de *sta'ziyè*. I. Les précurseurs de Nâseroddin Châh', *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam*, 2 (1974), pp. 73–126; Jean Calmard, 'Le mécénat des représentations de *ta'ziyè*. II. Les débuts du règne de Nāseroddin Chāh', *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam*, 4 (1976–7), pp. 133–62; and P. Chelkowski, 'Ta'ziya', *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, vol. 10, pp. 169–70 (Leiden, 1999), pp. 435–7.

46. See Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Rethinking the Shīʿī Role in Early Safavid Iran: Two Questions', *Liber Amicorum: Études sur l'Iran Médiéval et Moderne Offertes à Jean Calmard*, 1–2 (2006), pp. 308–17.
47. The best references are the publications of the Iranian *Dā'ira al-maʿārif-i bināhā-yi tarīkhī dar dawra-yi islāmī*, where the Imāmzāda are also recorded. I verified the basis of my statement in one of these publications, that is, Muḥammad Mahdī ʿUqābī, *Bināhā-yi ārāmgāhī* (Tehran, 1997).
48. Asserted in *The Relation of Douryi Efendy, ambassadeur de la porte Ottomane auprès du Roi de Perse* (Paris, 1810).
49. See the papers presented at a seminar held in Rome, at the Accademia dei Lincei, on 15 April 1991 and published as *La Shiʿa nell'Impero Ottomano* (Rome, 1993).
50. See Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'Glances on Shiʿite Deccan Culture', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 64 (1990), pp. 1–4 for a survey on the different aspects of Shiʿi presence in Deccan, from literature to art, and from politics to the Shiʿa–Sufi relationship.
51. The literature on the subject is enormous. See, for example, Muzaffar Alam, 'Religion and Politics in Awadh Society: 17th and Early 18th Centuries', in Anna L. Dallapiccola and Stephanie Zingel-Avé Lallemant, eds., *Islam and Indian Regions* (Stuttgart, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 321–49; Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, 'Lucknow under the Shia Nawābs 1775–1856', in Anna L. Dallapiccola and Stephanie Zingel-Avé Lallemant, eds., *Islam and Indian Regions*, pp. 367–75; Juan R. I. Cole, *Roots of North India Shiʿism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Nīshāpūrī 'Awadh* (Berkeley–Los Angeles, 1987).
52. See Christoph Marcinkowski's contribution to this volume.
53. For these events, see Pierre-Jean Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak contemporain* (Paris, 1991).
54. It could be interesting, in a less concise overview, to analyse the evolution of the perception of sacrality regarding the very popular King of Morocco, Muhammad V, before and after the Second World War; the recognition of the 'Alid aura' is naturally given as a matter of fact, and it seems to be so still, in the first decades of the twentieth century, also in countries like Tunisia; see the biographical souvenirs of Ahmed Elaouani-Chérif, 'La famille ʿAwānī-Sharīf de Qayrawān', in Bottini, ed., *Role of the Sādāt/Ashrāf*, pp. 4517.
55. See Chibli Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law. Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Najaf and the Shiʿi International* (Cambridge, 1993).
56. We have to take notice of the not so recent interest, sponsored by some Iranian religious milieux, for the philosophical works of Khomeini, and the consequent loss of importance even of his *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* (=*al-Ḥukūma al-Islāmiyya*). See Yahya Christian Bonaud, *L'imam Khomeini, un gnostique méconnu du XXe siècle. Métaphysique et théologie dans les oeuvres philosophiques et spirituelles de l'imam Khomeini*, ed. al-Bouraq (Beirut, 1997).
57. ʿAlī Sharīʿatī's lectures are widely circulated, especially as pamphlets in Iran and abroad, for example, *Shahādāt*, *Fāṭima Fāṭima ast*, *Shīʿa Ḥizb-i tamām*. Regarding Khomeini, an exam-

ple of his promotion as the most open leader not only in Iran that is worth mentioning would be a small anthology published by l'Institut Français d'Iranologie in Tehran entitled *Pensées politiques de l'Ayatollah Khomeini: présentation thématique au travers de ses écrits et de ses discours depuis 1945*, tr. Y. A. Henry (Paris, 1980).

58. For examinations of some of the diverse ways that Fatima has been portrayed in Southeast Asian traditions, see the contributions to this volume by Mulaika Hijjas, Wendy Mukherjee and Teren Sevea.
59. See Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, 'How to Place Women into History. Some Remarks on the Recent Shiite Interest in Women's Shrines', *Oriente Moderno*, 89 (2009), pp. 1–12.
60. See Irene Calzoni, 'Shiite Mausoleums in Syria with Particular Reference to Sayyida Zaynab's Mausoleum', in *La Shī'a nell'Impero Ottomano* (Rome, 1993), pp. 191–201.
61. See Chiara Formichi's contributions to this volume.
62. See Raffaele Mauriello, 'Descendants of the Family of the Prophet in contemporary History: a case study', in Supplement to *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 83 (Rome, 2011).

3. SHI'ISM IN THAILAND: FROM THE AYUTTHAYA PERIOD TO THE PRESENT

1. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, tr., *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur, 1970), p. 5.
2. For a good summary of the prevailing and at times conflicting theories, see Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur, 1969); Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 'Indonesia. iv-History: (a) Islamic period', in *EI2*, vol. 3, pp. 1218–21; G. W. J. Drewes, 'New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia?', in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique and Yasmin Hussain, eds., *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 1990); A. Gordon, ed., *The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian–Malay Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur, 2001). We have dealt with the issue of historical Shi'ism in the region in an earlier, somewhat more preliminary study, of which what follows is an extension; see C. Marcinkowski, 'Southeast Asia: i) Shi'ites in', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, available online at: http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/supp4/ShiitesSEAsia.html (accessed 23 November 2006).
3. By 'Persianate culture', we are referring here to that distinctive amalgam of Persian and Muslim cultures that eventually developed into the dominant culture, not only of the ruling elites, but also of the wider strata of society in Iran, Central Asia, Asia Minor and the Indian subcontinent after the Muslim conquest.
4. C. Marcinkowski, *Persian Historiography and Geography: Bertold Spuler on Major Works Produced in Iran, the Caucasus, Central Asia, India and Early Ottoman Turkey* (Singapore, 2003), p. 64, with a foreword by Professor Clifford Edmund Bosworth, FBA.
5. For useful introductions to the history of Malacca, see B. W. Andaya, 'Malacca', in *EI2*, vol. 6, pp. 207–14; and Muhammad Yusoff Hashim, *The Malay Sultanate of Malacca*, tr. D. J. Muzaffar Tate (Kuala Lumpur, 1992).
6. D. K. Wyatt, 'The Thai "Palatine Law" and Malacca', *Journal of the Siam Society*, 55 (1967), pp. 279–86.
7. For a convenient introduction, see al-Attas, 'Indonesia. iv-History: (a) Islamic period'.
8. See B. W. Andaya, 'The Indian "Saudagar Raja" (The King's Merchants) in Traditional Malay Courts', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 51 (1978), pp. 13–55;

W. H. Moreland, 'The Shahbandar in the Eastern Seas', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 52 (1920), pp. 517–33; A. Raymond, 'Shāhbandar: In the Arab World', in *EI2*, vol. 9, pp. 193–4; H. Yule and A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson. The Anglo-Indian Dictionary* (Ware, UK, 1996), pp. 816–17, s.v. 'Shabunder', with detailed references, and ibid., p. 914, s.v. 'Tenasserim'. The office appears to have been known in the Indian Ocean region as early as about 1350; see Yule and Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 816, s.v. 'Shabunder', referring to a visit to India's Malabar coast by the celebrated fourteenth-century Arab traveller, Ibn Baṭṭūta. In modern Malaysia, the office is apparently still extant, or at least known as *syahbandar*.

9. These developments are also discussed in Biancamaria Scarcia's contribution in this volume. For a comprehensive study of the history of the Quṭb-Shāhīs, see H. K. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi, 1974), which, nevertheless, has not much to say about the Shi'ī character of that kingdom.
10. See Vladimir Minorsky, 'The Qara-Qoyunlu and the Quṭb-Shāhs (Turmenica 10)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 18 (1955), pp. 50–73; Vladimir Minorsky, 'Jihān-Shāh Qara-Qoyunlu and His Poetry (Turmenica 9)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16 (1955), pp. 271–97. See also Christoph Marcinkowski, 'The Reputed Issue of the "Ethnic Origin" of Iran's Safavid Dynasty (907–1145/1501–1722): Reflections on Selected Prevailing Views', *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, 49 (2001), pp. 5–19.
11. S. Subrahmanyam, 'Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 51 (1992), pp. 340–63. Also of related interest is Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, 2007).
12. A. H. Johns, 'Aspects of Sufi Thought in India and Indonesia in the First Half of the 17th Century', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 28 (1955), pp. 70–77. For an excellent anthology of *wujūdiyyah* texts, see Muhammad Bukhari Lubis, *The Ocean of Unity, Wahdat al-Wujud in Persian, Turkish and Malay Poetry* (Kuala Lumpur, 1994), pp. 266–309, on Malay mystical poetry. Muḥy al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (b.1165, Murcia, Spain; d.1240, Damascus)—one of the most influential and original thinkers of the Islamic intellectual tradition, and also known as *al-shaykh al-akbar* ('the greatest master')—is often referred to as a mystical philosopher. He is generally thought of as the originator of the monist idea of *waḥdat al-wujūd* ('Unity of Being'), which has sometimes been interpreted as 'pantheism', although 'panentheism' would perhaps be more correct. Already during his lifetime, he was acknowledged to be one of the most important spiritual teachers within Sufism. Ibn al-ʿArabī was considered a heretic by some of the legalistic Sunnī scholars who misinterpreted some of his statements, such as 'The slave (that is, Man) is the Lord/God and the Lord/God is the slave (Man)' (Arabic: '*al-ʿabdu rabbun wa'l-rabbu ʿabdun*'). His emphasis lay on the true potential of the human being and the path to realising that potential, which reaches its completion in *al-insān al-kāmil* ('the perfect or complete man'). Ibn al-ʿArabī wrote at least 300 works, from minor treatises to the 37-volume *Meccan Illuminations* (*al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*), and the quintessence of his teachings, *The Bezels of Wisdom* (*Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*). He exerted an unparalleled influence, not only upon his immediate circle of friends and disciples, many of whom were considered spiritual masters in their own right, but also on succeeding generations, affecting the whole course of subsequent Islamic spiritual thought and practice in the Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Malay-speaking lands.
13. al-Attas, tr., *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*. See also Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas,

Rānīrī and the Wujudiyyah of 17th Century Acheh (Singapore, 1966); and Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay–Indonesian World. Transmission and Responses* (London, 2001), pp. 104–10. These works set Hamza's life and work in the late sixteenth century. More recently, however, this chronology has been challenged by the interpretation of newly published evidence. For these more recent debates, see Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, 'La stèle funéraire de Hamzah Fansuri', *Archipel*, 60 (2000), pp. 3–24; and Vladimir I. Braginsky, 'On the Copy of Hamzah Fansuri's Epitaph Published by C. Guillot & L. Kalus', *Archipel*, 62 (2001), pp. 21–33.

14. See also P. Riddell, 'Breaking the Hamzah Fansuri Barrier: Other Literary Windows into Sumatran Islam in the Late Sixteenth Century CE', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 125–40, esp. p. 137.
15. Osman Bakar, 'Sufism in the Malay–Indonesian World', in Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ed., *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* (New York, 1997), pp. 259–89, esp. p. 284. Maḥmūd Shabistārī was one of the most celebrated Persian Sufi poets of the fourteenth century.
16. A. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume II: Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven and London, 1993), p. 190; C. Marcinkowski, 'The Iranian–Siamese Connection: An Iranian Community in the Thai Kingdom of Ayutthaya', *Iranian Studies*, 35 (2002), pp. 23–46, esp. p. 29.
17. For a more detailed account of the Persian presence in Siam, see C. Marcinkowski, *From Isfahan to Ayutthaya. Contacts between Iran and Siam in the 17th Century* (Singapore, 2005), with a foreword by Professor Ehsan Yarshater, Columbia University.
18. Marcinkowski, 'The Iranian–Siamese Connection', pp. 27–8; Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'New Light on the Life of Hamzah Fansuri', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 40 (1967), pp. 42–51. See also the introduction of al-Attas, tr., *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*. For a different view, see L. F. Brakel, 'The Birth Place of Hamza Pansuri', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 42 (1969), pp. 206–12.
19. Al-Attas, tr., *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, p. 7.
20. English translation in E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia. Volume III: The Tartar Dominion (1265–1502)* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 397–8.
21. Yule and Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson*, pp. 795–6, s.v. 'Sarnau, Sornau'; G. R. Tibbetts, *Arab Navigation in the Indian Ocean before the Coming of the Portuguese* (London, 1981), 'index of place names' and 'Arabic index'.
22. Marcinkowski, 'The Iranian–Siamese Connection', pp. 25–9.
23. For a classical study of Ayutthaya's early history, see Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayutthaya: A History of Siam in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Kuala Lumpur, 1976). For a recent account of Ayutthaya's history, with a somewhat wider target group, see D. Garnier, *Ayutthaya. Venice of the East* (Bangkok, 2004).
24. Sunait Chutintaranond, 'Mergui and Tenasserim as Leading Port Cities in the Context of Autonomous History', in Kennon Breazeale, ed., *From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia* (Bangkok, 1999), pp. 104–18.
25. See Manzur Alam, 'Masulipatam: A Metropolitan Port in the Seventeenth Century', *Islamic Culture*, 33 (1959), pp. 169–87. See also Ashin Das Gupta, *The World of the Indian Ocean Merchant 1500–1800: Collected Essays of Ashin Das Gupta* (Oxford, 2001).
26. J. Aubin, 'Les Persans au Siam sous le Regne de Narai (1656–1688)', *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 4 (1980), pp. 95–126.
27. For an overview of Persian literary activities on the Deccan, see T. N. Devare, *A Short His-*

tory of Persian Literature at the Bahmani, the Adilshahi and the Qutbshahi Courts (Deccan) (Poona, 1960). We do, however, have three narratives written by European traders in the early seventeenth century, which deal mainly with Golconda's relations with Western powers; see W. H. Moreland, ed., *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century* (London, 1931).

28. F. Caron and J. Schouten, *A True Description of the Mighty Kingdoms of Japan and Siam. A Facsimile of the 1671 London Edition in a Contemporary Translation from the Dutch by Roger Manley* (Bangkok, 1986), p. 134; Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm (Muḥammad Rabīʿ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm), *The Ship of Sulayman*, tr. John O'Kane (New York, 1972), p. 94.
29. R. Ferrier, 'Trade from the Mid-14th Century to the End of the Safavid Period', in R. N. Frye, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6: *The Timurid and Safavid Periods* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 423, based on assertions by the early sixteenth-century travellers, Ludovico de Varthema and Tomé Pires.
30. See the studies by Yoko Nagazumi, 'Ayutthaya and Japan: Embassies and Trade in the Seventeenth Century', in Kennon Breazeale, ed., *From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia* (Bangkok, 1999), pp. 89–103; and Hiromu Nagashima, 'Persian Muslim Merchants in Thailand and Their Activities in the 17th Century: Especially on Their Visits to Japan', *Nagasaki Prefectural University Review*, 30 (1997), pp. 387–99.
31. See R. D. Cushman, tr., *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya: A Synoptic Translation*, ed. David. K. Wyatt (Bangkok, 2000), 'index of proper names', s.v. *khaek*.
32. Phraya Thiphakorawong Maha Kosa Thibodi, *Chotmaihet prathom wong sakun bunnak riapriang doi than phraya chula ratchamontri (sen) than phraya worathep (thuan) than chao phraya thiphakorawong maha kosa thibodi (kham bunnak)* (Records of the Beginning of the Bunnag Lineage, compiled by Phraya Chula Ratchamontri (Sen), Phraya Worathep (Thuan) and Chao Phraya Thiphakorawong Maha Kosa Thibodi (Kham Bunnag)) (Bangkok, 1939).
33. See 'Family Politics in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Siam', and 'Family Politics in Nineteenth-century Thailand', in D. K. Wyatt, *Studies in Thai History. Collected Articles* (Chiang Mai, 1999), pp. 96–105 and 106–30, respectively.
34. Oudaya Bhanuwongse, *A Genealogical Narrative of Shaykh Ahmad Qomi Chao Phya Boworn Rajnayok the Persian* (Bangkok, 2530 Buddhist Era [1987 CE]), its text being in English and Thai.
35. Marcinkowski, 'The Iranian–Siamese Connection'.
36. That is, 'of Qum', a town and major Shiʿī pilgrimage destination in central Iran. Whether this is really his place of origin, however, is still a matter of controversy among scholars.
37. Leonard Andaya refers to 'Shaykh Aḥmad' and his brother as originating 'from southern India', unfortunately, without mentioning a source; see L. Y. Andaya, 'Ayutthaya and the Persian and Indian Muslim Connection', in Kennon Breazeale, ed., *From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia* (Bangkok, 1999), pp. 119–36, esp. p. 125. The late David K. Wyatt offers somewhat more detailed information. According to him, 'Shaykh Aḥmad' arrived together with his younger brother, Muḥammad Saʿīd, at Ayutthaya in 1602 'from the Persian Gulf', again without giving evidence, where they took Thai wives. Wyatt also supplies a genealogical table of 'Shaykh Aḥmad's' descendants; see Wyatt, *Studies in Thai History*, p. 96; and D. K. Wyatt, *Thailand. A Short History* (Chiang Mai, 1999), p. 108. Bhanuwongse, *A Genealogical Narrative*, to face p. 1 (in English) and 61 (in Thai), too, has a very detailed table.
38. Phraya Thiphakorawong Maha Kosa Thibodi, *Chotmaihet prathom wong sakun bunnak*.

39. Farouk Omar, 'Shaykh Ahmad: Muslims in the Kingdom of Ayutthaya', *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics and Strategic Studies*, 10 (1980–81), pp. 206–14.
40. Kennon Breazeale, ed., *From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia* (Bangkok, 1999). See in particular Kennon Breazeale, 'Thai Maritime Trade and the Ministry Responsible', in ibid., pp. 1–54.
41. C. Marcinkowski, 'Iranians, *Shaykh al-Islams* and *Chularajmontris*: Genesis and Development of an Institution and its Introduction to Siam', *Journal of Asian History*, 37 (2003), pp. 59–76. On the Central Asian origins of the office of *Shaykh al-Islām*, see C. Marcinkowski, *Mīrzā Rafī'ā's Dastūr al-Mulūk: A Manual of Later Safavid Administration. Annotated English Translation, Comments on the Offices and Services, and Facsimile of the Unique Persian Manuscript* (Kuala Lumpur, 2002), pp. 86–7 and 268–78. On the history of that office in the context of Thai history and its present status, see Imtiyaz Yusuf, 'Islam and Democracy in Thailand: Reforming the Office of *Chularajmontri/Shaykh al-Islām*', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 9 (1998), pp. 277–98.
42. Bhanuwongse, *A Genealogical Narrative*, pp. 8–9.
43. Subrahmanyam, 'Iranians Abroad', p. 349.
44. R. Ringis, *Thai Temples and Temple Murals* (Kuala Lumpur, 1993), see index, s.v. 'Persian'; and C. Aasen, *Architecture of Siam. A Cultural History Interpretation* (Kuala Lumpur, 1998), see index, s.v. 'Persian'.
45. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680*, vol. 2, pp. 176–83.
46. Engelbert Kaempfer, *Am Hofe des Persischen Großkönigs (1684–85). Das erste Buch der Amoenitates Exoticae*, tr. Walther Hinz (Leipzig, 1940), p. 135.
47. This was also noticed by Kaempfer, *Am Hofe*, p. 199. See also Aubin, 'Les Persans au Siam', pp. 121–2.
48. Alam, 'Masulipatam', p. 178.
49. Vajirana National Library, ed., *Records of the Relations Between Siam and Foreign Countries in the Seventeenth Century. Copied from Papers Preserved at the India Office* (Bangkok, 1915–17), vol. 2, pp. 92–8.
50. E. W. Hutchinson, *1688 Revolution in Siam. The Memoir of Father de Beàze* (Hong Kong and Bangkok, 1990), p. 11, n. 2, and pp. 127–8.
51. According to a letter by the Apostolic Vicar and titular bishop François 'of Caesaropolis', a French missionary based in Isfahan, to his sovereign, Louis XIV, dated 20 January 1683, contained in R. Du Mans, *Estat de la Perse en 1660*, ed. C. Schefer (Paris, 1890), p. 339.
52. Kaempfer, *Am Hofe*, p. 199.
53. Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm (Muḥammad Rabīʿ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm), *Ship of Sulayman*, tr. John O'Kane (London, 1972). For the edition of the Persian text, see Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm (Muḥammad Rabīʿ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm), *Safīnah-yi sulaymānī (Safarnāmah-yi safīr-i Īrān bih Siyām, 1094–98)* (Travel Account of the Ambassador of Iran to Siam, 1094–98 {A.H./1682–86 CE}), ed. ʿAbbās Farūqī (Tehran, 1977). See also David K. Wyatt, 'A Persian Mission to Siam in the Reign of King Narai', in David K. Wyatt, *Studies in Thai History. Collected Articles* (Chiang Mai, 1999). For a review article of Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm (Muḥammad Rabīʿ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm), *The Ship of Sulayman*, tr. John O'Kane (New York, 1972); C. Marcinkowski, 'Safine-ye Solaymani', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, available online at http://www.iranica.com/newsite/index.isc?Article=http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/unicode/sup/Safine_ye_Solaymani.html (accessed 3 May 2006); and M. Suhaylī-Khwānsarī, 'Rawābiṭ-i dūstī-yi Siyām bih Īrān dar ʿahd-i Shāh Sulaymān-i Safawī" (Siam's

Friendly Relations with Iran during the Time of the Safavid Shāh Sulaymān), *Sālnāmah-yi kishwar-i Īrān* (Yearbook of the Country of Iran), 18 (n.d.), pp. 99–105.

54. See C. Marcinkowski, '"Holier than Thou": Buddhism and the Thai People in Ebn Muhammad Ibrahim's 17th-century Travel Account *Safineh-yi Sulaymani*', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 156 (2006), pp. 379–92.
55. He had no surviving son. Apparently referring to his cousin and son-in-law, ʿAlī.
56. Guy Tachard, *A Relation of the Voyage to Siam, Performed by Six Jesuits, Sent by the French King, to the Indies and China, in the Year, 1685* (Bangkok, 1999), pp. 214–15.
57. Bhanuwongse, *A Genealogical Narrative*, p. 11.
58. Cushman, trans., *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, 'index of proper names', s. v. *farang*.
59. J. Harris, 'The Persian Connection: Four Loanwords in Siamese', *Pasaa*, 16 (1986), pp. 9–12.
60. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Thailand*, available online at: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/th.html (accessed 27 June 2006).
61. On Thailand, see Regional Islamic Daʿwah Council of Southeast Asia and the Pacific (RISEAP), ed., *Muslim Almanach Asia Pacific* (Kuala Lumpur, 1996), pp. 206–20. See also Omar Farouk, 'The Muslims of Thailand: A Survey', in Andrew D. W. Forbes, ed., *The Muslims of Thailand* (Gaya, Bihar/India, 1988), vol. 1, pp. 1–30. For general accounts of the history of Islam in Thailand, see M. Gilquin, *The Muslims of Thailand*, tr. M. Smithies (Chiang Mai, 2005), and the already referred to work by Farouk, 'The Muslims of Thailand: A Survey'. Important sources in Thai language are Khatchatphai Burutsaphat, *Thai Mutsalim* (Thai Muslims) (Bangkok, 1976); and Kukrit Pramoj, *'Khwam pen ma khong mutsalim nai prathet Thai'* (History of the Muslims in Thailand), *Warasan Chumchon Chula*, 22 (1970), pp. 19–40. For introductions to the issue of Islam in southern Thailand and in other parts of the kingdom, and on other social issues, see C. Kersten, 'The Predicament of Thailand's Southern Muslims', *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 21 (2004), pp. 1–29; W. Kraus, 'Islam in Thailand. Notes on the History of Muslim Provinces, Thai Islamic Modernism and the Separatist Movement in the South', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 5 (1984), pp. 410–25; R. Scupin, 'The Socio-economic Status of Muslims in Central and North Thailand', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 3 (1981), pp. 162–89; R. Scupin, 'Muslims in South Thailand: A Review Essay', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 9 (1988), pp. 404–19; and Arong Suthasasna, 'Occupational Distribution of Muslims in Thailand: Problems and Prospects', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 5 (1984), pp. 234–42. For an interesting introduction to traditional religious education among southern Thai (Sunni) Muslims, see Hasan Madmarin, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi, Selangor/Malaysia, 2002). See also W. K. Che Man, *The Administration of Islamic Institutions in Non-Muslim States: The Case of Singapore and Thailand* (Singapore, 1991); and C. Marcinkowski, '"Kidnapping" Islam? Some Thoughts on Southern Thailand's Muslim Community between Ethnocentrism and Constructive Conflict Solution', *Islamic Culture*, 78 (2004), pp. 79–86.
62. Yusuf, 'Islam and Democracy in Thailand', p. 284.
63. Yusuf, 'Islam and Democracy in Thailand'. On the 1997 reorganisation of the office of *Chularajmontri*, see also Teerapol Arunakasikorn *et al.*, *The Royal Act on Islamic Organization Administration* (Bangkok, 1999), Division 1, Articles 6–10, pp. 9–12, quoted in Chaiwat Satha-Anand, 'Praying in the Rain: The Politics of Engaged Muslims in Anti-war Protest in Thai Society', *Pacifica Review: Peace, Security and Global Change*, 16 (2004), pp. 151–67, esp. p. 161, n. 44.

64. United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *International Religious Freedom Report 2005: Thailand*, available online at: http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51531.htm (accessed 5 July 2006).
65. Personal communication with Mr Adul Dantakean, editor with the Nation Multimedia Group, Bangna, Bangkok, May 2005.
66. Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Bangkok), ed., *Shaykh Ahmad Qomi and the History of Siam* (Bangkok, 2538 Buddhist Era/1995 CE).
67. Apparently, a volume of proceedings from this conference was published by the Cultural Centre of the Iranian Embassy, but I have been unable to verify this.
68. Imtiyaz Yusuf, ed., *Measuring the Effects of Iranian Mysticism in Southeast Asia* (Bangkok, 2004).
69. For a brief account of Thai–Iranian relations, see Christoph Marcinkowski, 'Thailand–Iranian Relations', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica (Supplement)*, available online at http://www.iranica.com/articles/sup/Thailand_Iran_Relt.html (accessed 20 July 2010).
70. Christoph Marcinkowski, *Shi'ite Identities: Community and Culture in Changing Social Contexts* (Zurich, 2010), pp. 178–9 and 198–201.
71. Ibid., pp. 182–3.

4. SOLDIER AND SON-IN-LAW, SPREADER OF THE FAITH AND SCRIBE: REPRESENTATIONS OF ʿALĪ IN JAVANESE LITERATURE

1. Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements? ʿAli and Fatimah in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 93–111, p. 106.
2. L. F. Brakel, *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah: A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975), p. 58.
3. The *Hikayat Amir Hamza* (Javanese: *Serat Menak*), *Tajusalatin* (Javanese: *Serat Makhota Raja*), *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* (Javanese: *Serat Bayan Budiman*), *Hikayat Seribu Masa'il* (Javanese: *Serat Samud*) are among works that were translated from Persian to Malay, and which also circulated in Javanese.
4. I. Goldziher, 'Ahl Al-Bayt', in *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 257.
5. In Malay, he appears as Sa'id; in Tamil, as Sāāth ibunu āUkkācu. This may well be a reference to a son of Ukashah bin Muḥsin—a well-known companion of the Prophet and participant in the battle of Badr. According to local Tamil tradition, Ukashah is buried in Porto Novo, Tamil Nadu; Rinkes writes that this companion is usually known, in Java, as Ukasah, Akasah and Kasah. See Takya Shu'ayb 'Alim, *Arabic, Arwi and Persian in Sarandib and Tamil Nadu* (Madras, 1993), p. 14; and D. A. Rinkes, *Nine Saints of Java*, tr. H. M. Froger (Kuala Lumpur, 1996), p. 25, respectively.
6. The earliest mention is in *Samud*, Oriental Manuscripts Collection, Leiden, MS. LOr 4001. In *Samud*, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, Jakarta, MS. Br. 504, Muḥammad summons ʿAlī to write the letter, while someone else acts as the messenger. In a third version, ʿAlī writes the letter as well; see *Serat Samud*, Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta, MS. CI 110.
7. Guillaume Frederic Pijper, *Het Boek der Duizend Vragen* (Leiden, 1924), p. 42.
8. This is the case for the early twentieth-century *Kitāb Masā'il Sayyidʿ Abdallāh Bin Salām Li'l-Nabī* (Cairo, *c.*1920, no author mentioned). It is also evident in an 1847 English translation

of a North African Arabic version, that is, N. Davis, *The Errors of Mohammedanism Exposed or, a Dialogue between the Arabian Prophet and a Jew* (Malta, 1847).

9. *Serat Samud*, Pura Pakualaman Library, Yogyakarta, 1884, MS. St. 80. 1.8.
10. ʿAlī is known not just for inscribing the Prophet's letters but for his own praiseworthy writing style. He is said to have produced works written in a most eloquent form of Arabic, and the sermons, sayings and invocations attributed to him are viewed as exhibiting an elevated and powerful style. See Gleaver, 'Ali Bin Abi Talib'.
11. *Samud*, 9.47–8.
12. *Kitab Seribu Masa'il*, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia (1910), MS. ML 442.
13. Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic Elements?' p. 105.
14. Vannapparimalappulavar, *Āyira Macalā*, ed. Cayitu 'Hassa' Muhammad (Madras, 1984), verses 218, 805, 374 and 443, respectively.
15. G. W. J. Drewes, 'Javanese Versions of the "Questions of 'Abdallah B. Salam"', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 142 (1986), pp. 325–7; see p. 326.
16. Pijper, *Het Boek der Duizend Vragen*, p. 60.
17. This is a fascinating but vast topic in its own right. For more on this, see Christoph Marcinkowski's chapter in this volume.
18. Theodore G. T. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java* (The Hague, 1967–70), vol. 2, p. 133. He believed the *Patimah Sami* text to be an exception.
19. See, also, contributions to this volume by Cristoph Marcinkowski and Biancamaria Scarcia; J. R. I. Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shiʿism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722–1859* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 22–3. Pijper mentioned that the *Book of One Thousand Questions* in Persian (*Hazar Masa'il*) was known in Golconda; see Pijper, *Het Boek der Duizend Vragen*, p. 57.
20. '*Penghormatan kepada tokoh tokoh sejarah Islam [...] bukanlah monopoli Muslim Syiah, tetapi juga hidup di kalangan luas masyarakat Muslim Sunni*'; see W. M. Abdul Hadi, *Sastra Melayu Bercorak Parsi*, available online at: www.icas-indonesia.org (accessed 23 October 2008). Pijper, for example, although surprised by ʿAlī's appearance in the early Javanese version he examined, explicitly noted that he did not take such mention as a sign of a Shiʿi edition of the *Book of One Thousand Questions*; see Pijper, *Het Boek der Duizend Vragen*, p. 69.
21. In Javanese *Samud* versions, in addition to his aforementioned roles, ʿAlī appears, with the other early prophets and companions in their mapping on Muḥammad's body, as having a particular *rijal* (prayer) and *puji* (praise), and within the Prophet's sacred genealogy.
22. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1975), p. 27; Robert Gleaver, 'Ali Bin Abi Talib', in *EI3*. Brill Online (accessed 26 July 2010).
23. Johns, in his notes on the Javanese *Tuhfa*, cited the Arabic tradition, *mā ra'aitu shai'an illa wa ra'aitu-ll*aha fihi*; see A. H. Johns, *The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet* (Canberra, 1965), p. 122. A Javanese rendering appears as '*tan ningali ingsun ing shai nanging Allah*'; see also Johns, *The Gift*, p. 82.
24. Garcin de Tassy, *Muslim Festivals in India and Other Essays*, tr. M. Waseem (Delhi, 1997), pp. 50–57. An interesting tradition that is attributed to Indian Ismailis, and is mentioned in the introduction to this volume, depicts ʿAlī as the tenth incarnation of Visnu, riding on the mule, Duldul, with Hanuman serving as his parasol-bearer; see De Tassy, *Muslim Festivals*, p. 27.
25. Ph. S. van Ronkel, 'Malay Tales about Conversion of Jews and Christians to Muhammedanism', *Acta Orientalia*, 10 (1932), pp. 61–2.

26. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (London, 1955), pp. 114–15.
27. Barnaby Rogerson, *The Heirs of Muḥammad: Islam's First Century and the Origins of the Sunni–Shia Split* (Woodstock, NY, 2007), p. 51.
28. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 561. ʿAlī was also chosen to destroy the idols of several tribes; see I. K. Poonawala and E. Kohlberg, "Ali b. Abi Taleb', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, available online at: www.iranicaonline.org (accessed 9 June 2010).
29. Serat Pandhita Raib, Mangkunegaran Palace, Surakarta, composed 1792, copied 1842, MS. MN 297.
30. Rogerson, *The Heirs of Muhammad*, p. 49. This motif, of the hero possessing unmatched strength, and proving it by moving or picking up an object no one else is able to, appears also in the *swayamvara* scene in the Ramayana. There, all those competing for Sita's hand cannot move Siva's bow even slightly. Then Rama comes along and not only raises the bow from its base, but snaps it effortlessly in his hands.
31. *Ajaran Sayid Ngali*, Museum Sono Budoyo Yogyakarta. 1930s, MS. MSB SK 143e. pp. 18–19.
32. See Wendy Mukherjee's contribution to this volume. For an analysis of two Malay texts focused on Fāṭima, see also Mulaika Hijjas' contribution to this volume.
33. This latter aspect is addressed in this volume by Faried F. Saenong and Teren Sevea.
34. *Dhawuh Sanggama*, Mangkunegaran Palace, Surakarta, MS. MN 567.9. An almost identical rendering of the text is found in *Kaol Sanggama* in *Serat Piwulang Warni-Warni*, Museum Sono Budoyo Yogyakarta, 1868, MS. MSB P152.
35. Additional textual examples of the genre from the Pakualam library include MS. Pi 43 *Wirid Ngelmi Asmara* (*A Guide to the Art of Love*) and MS. Pr 4 part 6 (1837), as well as *Ajaran Muhammad Pada Sayid* ʿAlī *Tentang Persetubuhan* (*Muḥammad's Teachings to ʿAlī about Sexual Relations*). See Sri Ratna Saktimulya, ed., *Katalog Naskah-Naskah Perpustakaan Pura Pakualaman* (Jakarta, 2005), p. 431. The Karaton Surakarta library holds several manuscripts of the thematically-similar *Serat [Wulang] Kadis Saresmi* (*Teachings about Love*) inscribed in 1885, the late nineteenth century, 1900 and 1944.
36. *Dhawuh Sanggama*, 44.
37. Examples include the aforementioned *Serat Samud* (PP St. 80) and the *Niti Mani*, among many others.
38. Budiono Herusatoto and Suyadi Digdoatmadja, *Seks Para Leluhur: Merancang Keturunan Berkualitas Lewat Tata Senggama ala Leluhur Jawa* (Yogyakarta, 2004), pp. 70–77; and Otto Sukatno, *Seks Para Pangeran. Tradisi dan Ritualisasi Hedonisme Jawa* (Yogyakarta, 2002), pp. 202–7 and 212–14. Both books contain many other passages that echo with, or directly cite, earlier Javanese sources on these matters.
39. For the story of the marriage, see, for example, *Menak Lakad*, Pura Pakualaman library, Yogyakarta, MS. St 48.
40. The *Tajusalatin* praises ʿAlī, along with the other three companions, as 'the four commanders of the world' ('*catur manggalaning rat*'); see Pura Pakualaman library, Yogyakarta, MS. St. 98.
41. Gleaver, 'Ali Bin Abi Talib'.

5. FĀṬIMA IN NUSANTARA

1. L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah, A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975), pp. 19–23.
2. Vladimir Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel: The Synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a Corpus of Mystical Texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 141–75; Wendy Mukherjee, '*Nabi Wadon*: A Book of Women From Java's North Coast' in Zaiton Ajamain and Nurasian Ahmad, eds., *Kesusasteraan Tradisional Asia Tenggara. Proceedings of the 3rd International Seminar on Southeast Asian Literature* (Kuala Lumpur, 2005), pp. 289–305.
3. Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Perfecting Women. Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi's Bihishti Zewar: A Partial Translation and Commentary* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), p. 22.
4. The portrayal of Fāṭima begins with references to her in Arabic records of the time on the founding of Islam. These are not too numerous and for my purposes, secondary Western scholarship based on them and summarised in *EI2* has been sufficient to develop a conception of her life. See L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima', in *EI2* http://brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-0217 (accessed 8 September 2010).
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, p. 84. Other Malay manuscripts are Ms CLXXV (Cod. 1953 (3)), *Hikayat Fatimah berswami*, Leiden University Library; H. H. Juynboll, *Catalogues van de Maleische en Sundaneesch Handschriften der Leidsche Universiteits-Bibliotheek* (Leiden, 1899), p. 189, and Ms 719; *Hikayat Fatimah Bersoeami*, Leiden University Library; Ph. S. Van Ronkel, *Supplement-Catalogus der Maleische en Minangkabausche Handschriften in de Leidsche Universiteits-Bibliotheek* (Leiden, 1921), p. 277.
11. In the chief collections of Indonesian manuscripts we find Ms CLXXXIII (Cod. 1744 (2)), *Hikayat nabi Mohammad mengadjar anaknya bibi Fatimah* and Ms CLXXXVI (Cod. 2199 (5)), *Hikayat nabi Mohammad mengajar anaknya Sitti Fatimah*, Museum of the Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, Juynboll, Catalogus, pp. 188, 189, Ms 89; *Hikayat nabi mengadjar anaknja Fatimah*, Leiden University Library, Van Ronkel, *Supplement-Catalogus*, p. 35 and Ms Raffles Malay 62 E: *Hikayat Fatimah Kawin*. The Royal Asiatic Society also contains the Prophet's admonitions. M. C. Ricklefs and P. Voorhoeve, *Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain: A Catalogue of Manuscripts in Indonesian Languages in British Public Collections* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 140, 141. Snouck Hurgronje reports that there is even a Turkish version of the admonitions. C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, (Leiden, 1906), vol. 2, p. 175.
12. Kern Sundanese Collection MS 1673, nos. 106 and 119.
13. Ramli Harun, *Hikayat Nabi Ibrahim dan Wasiet Nabi* (Jakarta, 1985).
14. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 1–2.
15. Ibid, p. 4. The rise of the Ṣafavids and of Shi'ism as the state religion in Persia is addressed in Scarcia's contribution to this volume.
16. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 3, 6.
17. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, p. 56.

18. Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent: Handbuch Der Orientalistik* (Leiden–Cologne, 1980), p. 125.
19. Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1459–1680*. Vol. Two: *Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven, CT and London, 1993), pp. 33, 134, 190.
20. G. W. J. Drewes and L. F. Brakel, *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri* (Dordrecht, 1986). The development of Shi'ism in Siam is addressed in Marcinkowski's contribution to this volume.
21. A. H. Johns, 'From Coastal Settlement to Islamic School and City: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java', in J. J. Fox, ed., *Indonesia: The Making of a Culture* (Canberra, 1980), pp. 163–5.
22. Reid, *Southeast Asia*, pp. 85–9.
23. Sir Richard Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 86–7; Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 9–10.
24. Ajip Rosidi, *Sastera dan Budaya: Kedaerahan Dalam Keindonesiaan* (Jakarta, 1995); pp. 339–44.
25. C. C. Macknight, 'The Concept of a "Work" in Bugis Manuscripts', *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 18 (1984), pp. 105–6.
26. Ding Choo Ming, 'Access to Malay Manuscripts', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 143 (1987), p. 438.
27. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 79–80.
28. Ding, 'Access', pp. 443–4.
29. Winstedt, *A History*, pp. 100–105.
30. *Katalog Induk Manuskrip Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur, 1993), pp. 64, 104.
31. Van Ronkel notes that in the Javanese Menak stories 'Kuraesin' is a variant of 'Quraysh', the original Arabic, which is retained in the Malay versions of the Amīr Ḥamza. P. S. Van Ronkel, *De Roman van Amir Hamza* (Leiden, 1895), p. 229.
32. M. H. Muhammad Musa, *Wawacan Sajarah Ambia* (Jakarta, 1981), vol. 7, pp. 50–51; cf. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 67–8.
33. Theodore G. Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java* (The Hague, 1970), vol. 3, pp. 341–2.
34. Van Ronkel, *Amir Hamza* (Leiden, 1895), p. 248.
35. Mr Aslam was a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Australian National University. He read out the text in Acehnese and gave an immediate Indonesian translation, from which I made notes. Aslam, *Audio-Taped Material* (1996).
36. C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, tr. A. W. S. O'Sullivan (Leiden, 1906), vol. 2, pp. 182–3.
37. Ramli Harun, *Hikayat Nabi Ibrahim dan Wasiet Nabi* (Jakarta, 1985), p. 5.
38. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, p. 176.
39. The Bataviaasch Genootschap holds another Malay version, Ms CCCXXXIII *Hikayat Fatima Berkata Kata Dengan Pedang ʿAli*. Van Ronkel, *Catalogus* (Batavia-'s Hage, 1909), pp. 254–5.
40. Ms Raffles Malay 62 E, *Hikayat Fatima Kawin* (Royal Asiatic Society) appears to be a parallel version, since the catalogue mentions only the Prophet's teaching to his daughter on the duties of a married woman. No mention is made in the catalogue summary of the legendary account of the wedding. Ricklefs and Voorhoeve, *Indonesian Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 140–41.
41. Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Perfecting Women: Maulana Ashraf ʿAlī Thanawi's* Bihishti Zewar (Berkeley, CA, 1992), pp. 330–63.

42. Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent*, p. 106.
43. Johns, 'From Coastal Settlement to Islamic School and City', in Fox, ed, *Indonesia*, pp. 163–82.
44. Personal communication, Nabiela Naly, MA candidate, Australian National University.
45. Personal communication, Michael Feener, National University of Singapore.
46. Personal communication, Virginia Hooker, Australian National University.

6. *PENGHULU SEGALA PEREMPUAN*: FĀṬIMA IN MALAY DIDACTIC TEXTS FOR WOMEN

1. [...] *saudaraku barang siapanya perempuan membaca daripada ceritera Fatima al-Zahra ini atau menengarkan dia serta diikutnya barang yang diajarkan oleh Rasul Allah SAW akan Fatima al-Zahra ini dan barang yang di[tegahkan] Rasul Allah SAW dengan Fatima al-Zahra maka jauhkan olehmu maka jadilah perempuan itu sekampung dengan Fatima dan barang siapa tiada mengikut ceritera ini maka perempuan itu tiada sekampung dengan Fatima hai saudaraku perempuan bahawa sanya sebenar-benarnya yang mengikut ia supaya bertambah-tambah martabatnya dari dunia datang ke akhirat* [...]; see Royal Asiatic Society, Raffles Malay 62 E *Hikayat Fatima Kawin*, no page numbers. For *di[tegahkan]*, the manuscript reads '*dititahkan*', but this makes poor sense and is likely to be a copyist's error.
2. That is, the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, the British Library, the Royal Asiatic Society, the School of Oriental and African Studies Library and the University of Leiden Library. More manuscripts are likely to be found in other collections, but these have not been taken into account for the present study.
3. L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima', *EI2*: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-0217 (accessed 12 September 2010).
4. See Wendy Mukherjee's chapter in this volume.
5. Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic Elements? ʿAlī and Fatimah in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 93–111.
6. Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic Elements?' p. 106.
7. The following summary is taken from Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima'.
8. David Pinault, 'Zaynab bint ʿAli and the Place of the Women of the Households of the First Imams in Shiʿite Devotional Literature', in Gavin R. G. Hambly, ed., *Women in The Medieval Islamic World: Power, Patronage and Piety* (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 69–98.
9. Pinault, 'Zaynab bint ʿAli', pp. 93–4.
10. L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah: A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975).
11. This paper assumes that *Hikayat Fatima Bersuami* is an alternate name for the same text as *Hikayat Fatima Kawin*, but see Ch. 5 fn. 40 in this volume.
12. Mulaika Hijjas, 'Not Just Fryers of Bananas and Sweet Potatoes: Literate and Literary Women in the Nineteenth-century Malay World', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 41 (2010), pp. 153–72; see pp. 169–71. Cf. Mukherjee, 'Fatimah in Nusantara', p. 147, on the use of such texts in marriage ceremonies, and 'young women stud[ying] the texts within some form of a girl's curriculum of Islamic instruction'.
13. Vladimir Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature* (Leiden, 2004), p. 610.
14. '*Sangat percintaan ketiga sangat kepada perempuan*' read as '*sangat percintaan kepada perempuan*'; see PNRI Ml. 42 Facsimile, p. 33.

15. The *Bihishti Zewar*, an interesting Urdu exception, will be discussed further below. I am grateful to Dr Ronit Ricci for bringing this to my attention.
16. G.-H. Bercher and L. Bousquet, tr., *Ghazâlî: Le Livre de Bons Usages en Matière de Mariage* (Paris, 1989).
17. Ian Proudfoot, 'An Expedition into the Politics of Malay Philology', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 76 (2003), pp. 1–53; see p. 3.
18. See the overall structure of R. O. Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur, 1996), and Braginsky's critique of this in the Introduction to his *Heritage*.
19. E. U. Kratz, 'The Editing of Malay Manuscripts and Textual Criticism', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 137 (1988), pp. 229–43; see p. 238.
20. Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements?' p. 96.
21. Unfortunately, I have not been able to access a legible and complete manuscript of the tale of Fāṭima speaking to Dhū'l-Fiqār. A brief account is, however, provided in Braginsky, *Heritage*, pp. 609–10, and Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements?' p. 103. A description and transliteration are provided in Jumsari Jusuf, Aisyah Ibrahim, Nikmah A. Soenardjo and Hani'ah, eds., *Sastera Indonesia Lama Pengaruh Islam* (Jakarta, 1984), pp. 62–8. The anecdote about the sword functions as a prologue to the usual set of instructions relating to the proper conduct of wives, as found in the ms *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatima*.
22. P. S. van Ronkel, 'Catalogus der Maleische Handschriften van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie*, 60 (1908), pp. 181–248; see p. 228. This manuscript is described and transliterated in Jusuf *et al., Sastera Indonesia Lama Pengaruh Islam*, pp. 34–44, and summarised by Braginsky, *Heritage*, p. 609.
23. That is, if we interpret the second '*suami*' in '*orang bersuaminya suami itu banyak dosanya*' as a copyist's error.
24. N. J. Dawood, tr., *The Koran* (London, 1990), p. 33.
25. This works under the assumption that '*memaki*' and '*mengumpat*' should go together under one heading, instead of having the latter added to the next heading, as the copyist had done.
25. Nevertheless, the mention of specific techniques certainly brings to mind the Sufi/Tantric texts discussed below, and in the papers by Faried Saenong and Teren Sevea in this volume.
27. E. P. Wieringa, *Catalogue of Malay and Minangkabau Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and Other Collections in the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 178–9.
28. Cod.Or. 1953, f. 233. This must be the manuscript mentioned by Winstedt, *History*, p. 71. The story of *Hikayat Nabi Bercukur*, as related by Winstedt, is certainly heretical according to 'those who have sat at the feet of the missionaries from the Hadramaut', but there is nothing particularly Shi'i about it.
29. E. Kohlberg, 'al-Rāfiḍa or al-Rawāfiḍ'. *EI2*: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-6185 (accessed 13 September 2010). R. J. Wilkinson glosses *rafidzi* as 'schismatic, heretic. Name given by orthodox Sunni Mohammedans to Moslems of other sects'; see R. J. Wilkinson, *A Malay–English Dictionary (Romanised)* (Tokyo, n.d.), p. 297.
30. Cod.Or. 1953, f. 155.
31. Cod.Or. 1953, f.156. This reading ('a y-b-r b-s-r') is uncertain, but perhaps refers to Siti Hawa. The four women vary considerably across manuscripts, but Fāṭima is a constant.
32. Or, to give it the title on its first page, *Hikayat Siti Fatima Pada Sekali Peristiwa Pada Suatu Hari Tiba-tiba Datang Seorang Faqir yang Miskin lagi Da'if Datang Meminta Sedekah di*

Rumah Siti Fatima; see PNRI Ml. 42 facsimile, p. 90. This is also described and transliterated (under the title 'Hikayat Nabi dan Orang Miskin') in Jusuf et al., *Sastera Indonesia Lama Pengaru Islam*, pp. 68–73.

33. *Notulen van de Algemeene en Bestuurs-Vergaderingen ven het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, 4 (Batavia, 1868), p. 40. In 2007, I was unable to obtain a photocopy of the actual manuscript, as it was apparently in too poor a condition to be consulted. I was, instead, provided with a 'new' manuscript, handwritten in 2005! Needless to say, it is possible that further scribal errors have been introduced in this latest copy.
34. Braginsky, *Heritage*, p. 610, describes two distinct recensions of this last text, a Sufi version and 'a completely moralistic' one; the version in Ml. 42 falls into the latter category.
35. Dawood, tr., *The Koran*, p. 61. The Arabic is corrupt in the facsimile, and possible also in the original manuscript.
36. A *gantang* is a measure of rice, approximately 4.5 litres.
37. The manuscript reads '*m-a w y*', which looks suspiciously like a corruption of Muʿawiyah, the first of the Umayyad caliphs, and detested by the Shiʿa. Brakel notes that an Acehnese manuscript of *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah* contains a curious admonition attributed to that anti-heresiarch Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī, exhorting readers to regard Yazid and Muʿāwiyya 'as fellow Muslims'; see Brakel, *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah*, p. 23. It could be that the name Muʿawi occurs in this *Fāṭima* text as a misunderstood and corrupted vestige of a much earlier attempt to rehabilitate Muʿawiya and thereby 'de-Shiʿitise' the narrative.
38. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima'.
39. Ibid.
40. A. J. Wensinck; Annemarie Schimmel, 'Shafāa'. *EI2*: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-1019 (accessed 13 September 2010).
41. Pinault, 'Zaynab bint 'Ali', p. 72.
42. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima'.
43. The special role of *Fāṭima*—as the 'feminine angel of the *supracelestial* Earth, assuming the rank of the divine Sophia'—in Iranian Shiʿi esotericism of the Shaykhi school is described by Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shiʿite Iran* (London, 1990), p. 57. However, the nineteenth-century Shaykhi movement was probably too late to have influenced Malay Islam. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for this reference.
44. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima'.
45. See Ian Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books* (Kuala Lumpur, 1993), pp. 29–31.
46. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah*, pp. 7–28, 58.
47. Ibid., p. 59.
48. Ibid., p. 58.
49. Brakel shows that at least its first part was based on a *maqtal*, or narrative about the martyrdom of Husayn; see Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah*, pp. 23–4.
50. See Wendy Mukherjee's contribution to this volume.
51. Described and transliterated in Jusuf et al., *Sastra Indonesia Lama Pengaruh Islam*, p. 34. The manuscript is PNRI Ml. 205.
52. Described and transliterated in Jusuf *et al.*, *Sastra Indonesia Lama Pengaruh Islam*, pp. 109–30. The manuscripts are PNRI Ml. 686, PNRI Ml. 685 and PNR Ml. 145.
53. '*Hai anakku Fatimah ajarla oleh kamu kepada anakmu/laki2 dan perempuan suruh ia mengaji Qur'an dan sembahyang dan puasa*'; see PNRI Ml. 52, ff. 11–12.

54. See Siti Nor Bahyah Mahamood, *Cakar Harimau: Tips Kebahagian Rumahtangga* (Kuala Lumpur, 2005), pp. 39–44.
55. See Mulaika Hijjas, 'The Fruit of Good Intentions: *Hikayat Darma Ta'siah* in the National Library of Indonesia's Ml. 42', in Ben Murtagh and Jelani Harun, eds., *Crossing the Sea of Traditional Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur, 2013).
56. J. H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, 'Volksoverlevering in beeld', *Djawa*, 19 (1939), pp. 54–68, see pp. 63–4. See also Baroroh Baried, 'Le Shi'isme en Indonésie', *Archipel*, 15 (1978), pp. 65–84; see p. 80.
57. '*Adinda beroleh pengajaran oleh Siti Fatima*'; see PNRI Ml. 42 facsimile, p. 27.
58. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima'.
59. Mukherjee also observes that 'Fatimah and Ali were the only true models of fertility of the Prophet's house', but I am not sure that 'this is surely a vestige of Shi'i thought'; see Mukherjee, 'Fatimah in the Pasisir Zone', p. 10. 'Mainstream' Middle Eastern Shi'ism may find the association of rather sexually explicit material with the revered ʿAlī and Fāṭima rather outré, to say the least. In Corbin's account of Fāṭima in the Iranian Shaykhi teachings, for instance, she is conceived of as the soul itself, the anima, beyond sexual differentiation and certainly beyond sexuality. Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, pp. 66–7.
60. Barbara Watson Andaya, *The Flaming Womb* (Honolulu, 2007), pp. 1, 232.
61. Vladimir Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel: The Synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a Corpus of Mystical Texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 141–75; see p. 151.
62. Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel', p. 154.
63. Ibid., pp. 166–7.
64. Ibid., p. 167.
65. Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History* (New York, 2009), p. 433.
66. PNRI Ml. 52, f. 5.
67. RAS Raffles Malay 47 *Hikayat Fartana Islam*, f. 332, f. 334.
68. Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Perfecting Women: Maulana Ashraf ʿAlī Thanawi's Bihishti Zewar. A Partial Translation with Commentary* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), p. 9.
69. Raja ʿAlī Haji's 'Syair Siti Sianah', in Abu Hassan Sham, ed., *Puisi-Puisi Raja ʿAlī Haji* (Kuala Lumpur, 1993), pp. 363–443.
70. Braginsky, *Heritage*, p. 712.
71. Vladimir Braginsky, 'Five Pious Ladies on the Swing: Some Considerations about *Hikayat Si Burung Pingai*', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 33 (2005), pp. 257–65; see p. 258.
72. Braginsky, 'Five Pious Ladies', pp. 259–61.

7. ʿALID PIETY IN BUGIS TEXTS ON PROPER SEXUAL ARTS

1. C. Pelras, 'Religion, Tradition and the Dynamics of Islamization in South Sulawesi', *Indonesia*, 57 (1993), p. 138; S. Mappangara and I. Abbas, *Sejarah Islam di Sulawesi Selatan* (Makassar, 2003), p. 77.
2. Hamonic, 'La fête du grand Maulid à Cikoang, regards sur une tarekat dite 'Shī'i' en Pays Makassar', *Archipel*, 29 (1985), pp. 175–8; A. Sila, 'The Festivity of Maulid Nabi in Cikoang, South Sulawesi: Between Remembering and Exaggerating the Spirit of the Prophet', *Studia Islamika*, 8 (2001), p. 28.
3. D. Bartels, 'The Evolution of God in the Spice Islands: The Converging and Diverging of

Protestant Christianity and Islam in the Colonial and Post-Colonial Periods', paper presented at the Symposium 'Christianity in Indonesia', Frobenius Institute of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University at Frankfurt/Main (14 December 2003), p. 4; C. Marcinkowski, 'Selected Historical Facets of the Presence of Shiʿism in Southeast Asia', *The Muslim World*, 99 (2009), p. 388.

4. F. F. Saenong, 'In Search of Barakka and Authenticity: Global Network of Pesantren and 'Ulama' in South Sulawesi (Indonesia)', paper presented at the SSRC Conference on 'Inter-Asia Connection', Dubai (21 February 2008).
5. C. Pelras, *The Bugis* (London, 1996), p. 193.
6. R. F. Ellen, 'Ritual, Identity and the Interethnic Relations on Seram', in D. S. Moyer and J. M. Claessen, eds., *Time Past, Time Present, Time Future* (Dordrecht, 1988), pp. 117–35; D. Bartels (2003); C. Marcinkowski (2009).
7. Some Qur'anic verses present on this *kain* are *naṣr min Allāh wa fatḥ qarīb* (Q. 61: 13), *layaqūlunna Allāh* (43: 87), *taḏ ūn min Allāh* (Q.).
8. These include, for example, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's *Saqāʾiq al-Utruj fī Raqāʾiq al-Ghunj*; *Nawādir al-ʿAyk*; *al-Wishāḥ fī Fawāʾid al-Nikāḥ*; Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalūsī's *Ṭawq al-Ḥamāma fī Ulfa wa al-Alif*; al-Nafzāwī's *al-Rawḍ al-Athīr fī Nuzhat al-Khaṭīr*; *al-Īdāḥ fī ʿIlm al-Nikāḥ*; Muḥammad al-Bāz's *Ḥadāʾiq al-Muʿa: Funūn al-Jinsʿinda al-Arab*; Ibn Bakka's *Lawāʾij al-Gharam*; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Tifāshī's *Nuzha al-Albāb fi-mā lā Yūjad fī Kitāb*; Ibn Kamal Pasha's *Rujūʿ al-Shaykh ilā Sibāhu fī al-Quwwaʿalā al-Bāh;* ʿAlī al-Qazwīnī's *Jawāmiʿ al-Ladhdha*; and Fawziya al-Durāʾī's *al-Qubla*; *al-Ṭaʿām wa al-Jins*; *al-Aḥlām al-Jinsiya*.
9. Edwin P. Wieringa, 'The Javanese Handbook for Would-be Husbands: The *Sĕrat Candraning Wanita*', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 33 (2002), pp. 431–49; Vladimir Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel: The Synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a Corpus of Mystical Texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 141–75; Wendy Mukherjee, 'The Book of Love Magic of Khatijah Terong', *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 31 (1997), pp. 29–46. See also the chapter by Mukherjee in this volume.
10. Important previous studies of such materials include: L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah: A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975); and E. P. Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic elements? ʿAlî and Fâtimah in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 93–111.
11. See B. F. Matthes, *Kort verslag aangaande alle mij in europa bekende Makassaarsche en Boeginesche handschriften, vooral die van het nederlandsch bijbelgenootschap te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1875), pp. 6–8; also C. Pelras, *Manusia Bugis* (Jakarta, 2006), p. 246.
12. W. A. Gani, *Hikayat Tamim Al-Dari* (Kuala Lumpur, 1989).
13. See A. Arief, *Kisah Shaykh Mardan* (Jakarta, 1981).
14. See Anon., *Hikayat Syeikh Mardan* (Kuala Lumpur, 1994).
15. E. Amin, *Sja'ir Perang Mengkasar* (The Rhymed Chronicle of the Macassar War), ed. and tr. C. Skinner (S-Gravenhage, 1963), pp. 70–71, 223.
16. E. Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shiʿitic Elements? ʿAlī and Fatima in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 4 (1996), p. 106; B. Baried, 'Shi'a Elements in Malay Literature', in S. Kartodirdjo, ed., *Profiles of Malay Culture: Historiography, Religion and Politics* (Jakarta, 1976), p. 64; B. Baried, 'Le Shiʿism en Indonésie', tr. C. Pelras, *Archipel*, 15 (1978), p. 78. The names of the story's two primary characters are derived from the names of famous battles during the formative years of Islam in Arabia.

17. Baried, 'Shi'a Elements in Malay Literature', p. 63.
18. E. Wierenga, 'In Praise of a Virtuous Woman: The Story of Darma Tasiah', *IIAS Newsletter*, 6 (1995), p. 36. The Bugis text is entitled *Daramatasia*, and it is discussed in N. I. Idrus, *'To Take Each Other': Bugis Practices of Gender, Sexuality and Marriage*, PhD Thesis, Dept. of Anthropology (RSPAS), Australian National University (2003), pp. 161–6.
19. Baried, 'Shi'a Elements in Malay Literature', p. 64.
20. *Katalog Induk Naskah Nusantara Sulawesi Selatan* (Paeni, 2003), p. 970.
21. M. Hadrawi, *Assikalaibinéng: Kitab Persetubuhan Bugis* (Makassar, 2008), pp. 9–14.
22. N. I. Idrus, '*To Take Each Other*'. MS 26/13, 26/18, 32/8, 35/15, 45/23, 47/18, 48/18.
23. S. Alang, *Etika Seksual dalam Lontara: Telaah Pergumulan Nilai-nilai Islam dengan Budaya Lokal* (Makassar, 2004). MS 33/18; 33/40; 35/15; 45/23; 47/18; 48/18.
24. Hadrawi, *Assikalaibinéng*, *Mitos dan Perilaku Seksual, Tinjauan terhadap Lontarak Bugis Assikalaibinéng* (Jakarta, 1999); and Hadrawi and Yasminy, *Pola Hubungan Suami Istri dalam Aktivitas Seksual, Tinjauan dalam Lontarak Assikalaibinéng* (Jakarta, 2004).
25. F. F. Saenong, 'Vernacularizing the Qur'ān: Islamic Bugis and Makassarese Texts in South Sulawesi, Indonesia', paper presented at the CILS Conference of Islamic Studies, Melbourne (24 November 2009).
26. MS 45/23, pp. 1–3.
27. MS 45/23, pp. 3–6; MS 48/18, pp. 74, 77 and 97.
28. MS 48/18, p. 78; MS 45/23, pp. 15–16 and 19. Another part of MS 45/23 also provides similar but different sobriquets of ʿAlī (*Sayyidal Amīn*, 'Mr Faithful') and Fatima (*bāb al-raḥmān*, 'Gate of the Merciful'). See MS 45/23, p. 19.
29. MS 48/18, p. 76.
30. MS 45/23, pp. 31–3.
31. MS 48/18, p. 76.
32. MS 48/18, p. 77.
33. MS 48/18, p. 78.
34. MS 48/18, pp. 80, 83.
35. MS 48/18, p. 83.
36. MS 45/23, pp. 9–10.
37. MS 45/23, p. 10.
38. For a brief introduction of this text, see E. Wierenga, 'In Praise of a Virtuous Woman', p. 36; N. I. Idrus, 'To Take Each Other', pp. 161–6.
39. This is a teaching attributed to ʿAlī. See G. Brook, *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women* (Sydney, 1995), p. 39.
40. Idrus, 'To Take Each Other', p. 201.
41. Ms 45/23, p. 12.
42. L. F. Brakel, *Hikayat Muḥammad al-Hanafiyyah*, pp. 19–23.
43. Hadrawi, *Assikalaibinéng*, p. 125.
44. C. Pelras, 'Religion, Tradition and the Dynamics of Islamization in South Sulawesi', *Indonesia*, 57 (1993), p. 150.
45. Hadrawi, *Assikalaibineng*, p. 3.
46. M. Paeni, *Katalog Induk Naskah Nusantara Sulawesi Selatan* (Jakarta, 2003); adapted from Hadrawi, *Assikalaibinéng* and Paeni *Katalog*.

8. SEX TO THE NEXT WORLD: HOLY DESCENT AND RESTORATIVE SEX FOR THE *MUALAD*

1. Cited from Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 148–9.
2. Scott Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies* (Chapel Hill, 2007), pp. 4–6.
3. This MS (*Malay 120* of the W. E. Maxwell collection, Royal Asiatic Society) has the numbers of instructions (1–30) that appear to be marked out by or at the request of Maxwell. Maxwell was the Assistant Resident of Perak in 1876, and from 1878 to 1882, and was the most prolific contributor to the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (*JSBRAS*) in the late nineteenth century. In an 1878 article on two Perak manuscripts, Maxwell stressed the urgency of obtaining information on 'local traditions, and of getting explanations about various customs and ceremonies [...] [of the Malays] which will diminish as civilization extends'; see W. E. Maxwell, 'Notes on Two Perak Manuscripts', in R. O. Winstedt and R. J. Wilkinson, eds., *A History of Perak* (Singapore, 1934), p. 193.
4. M. C. Ricklefs and P. Voorhoeve, *Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain: A Catalogue of Manuscripts in Indonesian Languages in British Public Collections* (Oxford, 1977), p. 150.
5. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, colophon on the first page of the manuscript.
6. I am grateful to Muhammad Hashim for allowing me access to Abdullah Al-Aydarus's 1892 epistles and a series of documents pertaining to the family of the *keramat*, Siti Maryam Al-Aydarus (d.1853). For further details of the 1892 epistle, refer to Teren Sevea, *Pawangs on the Malay Frontier: Miraculous Intermediaries of Rice, Ore, Beasts and Guns* (UCLA, unpublished dissertation).
7. For example, see Maxwell, 'Shamanism in Perak', in *A History of Perak*, p. 223; C. O. Blagden, 'Preface: Folklore and Popular Religion', in W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic: An Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsular* (London, 1965), pp. 5–6. See also Sevea, *Pawangs on the Malay Frontier*.
8. R. O. Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*: *Being Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic* (London, 1925), pp. 63, 131.
9. Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*, p. 76.
10. R. O. Winstedt, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm,' *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 86 (1922), p. 265.
11. Winstedt, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm', pp. 261–7; see also Richard Winstedt, *The Malays: A Cultural History* (London, 1961), pp. 37–8, 40. Refer also to Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature contain Shi'itic Elements? 'Alī and Fatima in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 93–111.
12. Winstedt, *Malay Magician*, p. 129; Winstedt, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm', p. 261; Winstedt, *The Malays; A Cultural History*, pp. 37–40.
13. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 1.
14. Ibid., p. 2.
15. Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*, pp. 28, 88. For a critique of the evolutionary basis of Winstedt's work, see Daniel Goh, 'States of Ethnography: Colonialism, Resistance, and Cultural Transcription in Malaya and the Philippines, 1890s-1930s', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49 (2007), pp. 109–42; see pp. 110–12, 122, 136–7.
16. Cited from Annemarie Schimmel, '"I take off the dress of the body": Eros in Sufi Literature and Life', in Sarah Coakley, ed., *Religion and the Body* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 272.
17. Carl Ernst, 'Situating Sufism and Yoga', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 15 (2005), pp. 15–43.

18. Vladimir Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel: The Synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a Corpus of Mystical Texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32 (2004), pp. 141–75; see p. 141.
19. D. G. White, 'Introduction', *Tantra in Practice* (Princeton, NJ, 2000), p. 9; see also Ernst, 'Situating Sufism and Yoga', p. 22.
20. Simon Digby, 'Abd al-Quddus Gangohi: The Personality and Attitudes of a Medieval Indian Sufi', *Medieval India: A Miscellany* (Delhi, 1992), vol. 3, p. 45.
21. Ernst, 'Situating Sufism and Yoga', pp. 20–21, 41–2.
22. Nile Green, 'Breathing in India, *c.*1890', *Modern Asian Studies*, 42 (2008), pp. 283–315.
23. In addition to her contribution to this volume, see Wendy Mukherjee, 'Fatimah in Nusantara', *Sari, Journal of Malay Civilisation*, 23 (2005), pp. 137–52; Wendy Mukherjee, '*Nabi Wadon*: A Book of Women from 18th Century Java', in Zaiton Ajamain and Norasian Ahmad, eds., *Kesusasteraan Tradisional Asia Tenggara, Prosiding Seminar Antarabangsa Kesusasteraan Asia Tenggara Ke-3* (Kuala Lumpur, 2005), pp. 290–305.
24. Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, CA, 2006).
25. Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, pp. 139, 150. See also Engseng Ho, 'Hadhramis Abroad in Hadhramaut: The Muwalladin', in Ulrike Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith, eds., *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s* (Leiden and New York, 1997), pp. 131–46; see pp. 131–2.
26. Cited from J. A. E. Morley, 'The Arabs and the Eastern Trade', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22 (1949), pp. 143–76; see p. 162. For similar processes of mobility in the Deccan, see R. M. Eaton, 'Introduction', Indrani Chatterjee and Eaton, eds., *Slavery and South Asian History* (Indiana, 2006), p. 7. I am grateful to Emma Flatt for directing me to appropriations of the category '*mualad*' in the seventeenth-century Deccan; see Muhammad Qasim Firishtah, *Ferishta's History of Dekkan: from the first Mahummedan conquests: with a continuation from other native writers, of the events in that part of India, to the reduction of its last monarchs by the Emperor Aulumgeer Aurungzebe: also, the reigns of his successors in the Empire of Hindoostan to the present day: and the history of Bengal, from the accession of ʿAlíverdee Khan to the year 1780* (Shrewsbury, 1794). I am also grateful to Muhammad Hashim for access to Abdullah Al-Aydarus's late-nineteenth-century diatribes against '*lebbais*'. The definition of '*lebbai*' here is derived from Torsten Tschacher's discussion in 'Circulating Islam: Understanding Convergence and Divergence in the Islamic Traditions of Ma'bar and Nusantara', Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea, eds., *Islamic Connections: Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 2009), pp. 48–67.
27. I am grateful to Habib Hussein Fiqri Al-Aydarus for sharing unpublished late-nineteenth-century epistles and hagiographical literature pertaining to the *keramat*, Habib Hussein, and invaluable discussions related to the 'legitimate' and 'fake' descendants of the *keramat* (Jakarta, December 2010; July 2011; March 2012).
28. See Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, p. 4; also refer to Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, pp. 95–8.
29. Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*, p. 76.
30. Interview with Muhammad A. Ridhwan, Larut, Perak (December 2009).
31. 'Perak Council Minutes: May 1887', *Perak Government Gazette* (Taiping, 1887).
32. Interviews with Muhammad Hashim, Singapore (March 2010; December 2011); Interview with Muhammad Hashim, Belanja, Perak (January 2013).

33. Abas Ali suggested that Pa' Sulong spent significant periods of preaching in Belanja and Gunung Semanggol, Perak. Interview with Abas Alī, Sungai Siput, Perak (December 2009).
34. Interview with Abas Alī, Sungai Siput, Perak (December 2009), p. 6.
35. H. C. Clifford, 'An Expedition to Kelantan and Trengganu: 1895', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 34 (1961), p. 61.
36. See W. R. Roff, 'Patterns of Islamization in Malaysia, 1890s-1990s: Exemplars, Institutions and Vectors', *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 2009), pp. 97–9.
37. Roff, 'Patterns of Islamization'; J. M. Gullick, *Malay Society in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Beginnings of Change* (Singapore and New York, 1987), pp. 282–3, 287, 290–96.
38. See Roff, 'The Origins and Early Years of the Majlis Agama Kelantan', *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*, p. 185.
39. Cited from Green, 'Breathing in India', p. 287.
40. Winstedt, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm', pp. 262–3.
41. Accessible as MS 46945 at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Shaykh Husain, *Surat daripada tuan Shaykh Husain Pulau Tiga* (Perak, 1881), p. 26. A stamp of Kuala Kangsar allows us to deduce that the epistle was received on 3 October 1881.
42. Shaykh Husain, *Surat daripada tuan Shaykh Husain Pulau Tiga*, pp. 1–25.
43. Edwin Wieringa, 'A Javanese Handbook for Would-Be Husbands: The *Serat Candraning Wanita*', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 33 (2002), pp. 431–49; see pp. 435, 442.
44. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 1–2.
45. For a discussion of the sensation of *fana* attained through bodily performances, see Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, pp. 230–32. See also Winstedt's and J. D. Gimlette's survey of a Kelantan incantation, referred to in John Gimlette, *Malay Poisons and Charm Cures* (Kuala Lumpur–Singapore–London, 1971) as 'The Bestirring Song of the To' Mindok', which calls upon the 'four winds of disease' to quit a patient's body: the 'wind' in human hair and skin corresponds with Shari'a; the wind in flesh and blood corresponds with *itikad* or *hakikat* (the plane of truth); the "wind"' in sinews and bones corresponds with the mystic path or *tarikat*, and, the 'wind' in life and the seed corresponds with *marifat*; see Winstedt, 'A Malay Pantheist Charm', pp. 261–2; Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*, p. 75; Gimlette, *Malay Poisons*, pp. 77–9.
46. Ibid., pp. 6–7.
47. See Schimmel, '"I take off the dress of the body": Eros in Sufi Literature and Life', p. 268.
48. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 10.
49. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 6. Also refer to Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, p. 28.
50. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 2.
51. This notion of a coiling spiral of positive energy also appears in the work of Haji Imdad Allah, who has looked at the *kalimah* as a spiral of negation and affirmation that circulates throughout the body's limbs, rectifying all organs and limbs. See Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, pp. 230–32.
52. Possibly referring to the *kimas* artery that lies in the left knee whose heat affects the inner heart. See Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, p. 309.
53. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 9–10.
54. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 8. Braginsky locates a similar late-nineteenth-century Sumatran text, *Hikmat at-Nisa*, which tells its audience that it is a 'gift' of the Sufi master, and cautions against sharing this 'gift' with the uninitiated; see Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel'.

55. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 6–8.
56. Ibid., p. 8.
57. Ibid., p. 6.
58. Ibid., p. 10.
59. I am grateful to Muhammad Hashim and Abas Ali for valuable discussions concerning the conception of the *mualad* of Pa' Sulong's late-nineteenth-century devotional circle as embodiments of God and heavenly sexual fluids.
60. See Digby's discussion of the production of *rasa* (seminal fluid or 'water of life') in the skull, 'Abdl al-Quddus Gangohi: The Personality and Attitudes of a Medieval Indian Sufi', p. 45.
61. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 1–2.
62. Ibid., pp. 2, 4–7, 10.
63. Refer also to Wieringa's analysis of a Javanese erotic text directed at procreation in Wieringa, 'A Javanese Handbook for Would-Be Husbands,' pp. 442–3.
64. Ibid., p. 3.
65. Ibid., p. 8.
66. Green, 'Breathing in India', p. 31.
67. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 8.
68. Refer to Kugle's understanding of the body as the centre of names and attributes. See *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, p. 29.
69. Ibid., pp. 8–9.
70. Ibid., p. 9. Refer to Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel', pp. 142, 145; see also Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, pp. 29, 33.
71. This psychic centre, plausibly, corresponds to the first of main seven psychic centres in tantric literature, the *muladhara cakra*. Refer to Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel', pp. 144–5.
72. Digby, 'Abdl al-Quddus Gangohi: The Personality and Attitudes of a Medieval Indian Sufi'; see also Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, pp. 93, 244–5.
73. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 1–2, 10.
74. Ibid., p. 5.
75. Ibid., pp. 7–8.
76. Ibid., p. 5.
77. Ibid., pp. 7–8.
78. Ibid., 6–7.
79. Ibid., p. 7.
80. Ibid., p. 8. Refer to Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, p. 45.
81. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 3.
82. Ibid., pp. 3–4.
83. For an explication of ceremonies at Mina, see Roff, 'Sociological Interpretations of Religious Practice: The Case of the *Hajj*', *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*, pp. 278–9.
84. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, p. 4. See also remedies for 'repairing' the hymen: Su, *Ilmu Penyakit*, pp. 21, 23, 50; *Kitab Ubat-Ubat Melayu*, pp. 1–2. Furthermore, Hugh Urban argues that tantra unleashed the power associated with 'impure substances such as menstrual blood [...] [changing] a source of pollution into a source of divine energy', *The Power of Tantra: Religion, Sexuality, and the Politics of South Asian Studies* (London–New York, 2010), p. 56.
85. J. F. McNair, *Perak and the Malays: 'sarong' and 'kris'* (London, 1878), p. 226.
86. J. M. Gullick, *Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya* (London, 1958), p. 36.

87. Refer to Roff, 'Sanitation and Security: The Imperial Powers and the *Hajj* in the Nineteenth Century', *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*, p. 287; Gullick, *Malay Society in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Beginnings of Change*, pp. 298–300.
88. Annemarie Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Work of Jalaloddin Rumi* (Albany, NY, 1993), p. 292.
89. Ibid., p. 5.
90. Ibid.,p. 4.
91. Ibid., p. 4. For a view on the 'trinity' of Sufi speculation, see Winstedt, *The Malay Magician*, p. 75. For a discussion of a sexual posture of an elevated female partner, see Philip Rawson, *The Art of Tantra* (London, 1973), pp. 10–11. Refer also to Braginsky, 'The Science of Women and the Jewel', p. 159. Perhaps, there is an allusion here to tantric images of the *yogini* ('witch') in the air, the '*lobang*' being three storeys high here, who is drawn into coition with the male religious adept through his production of sexual fluids and correct stimulation. See D. G. White, *Kiss of the Yogini: 'Tantric Sex' in its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago, 2006), p. 11.
92. Saleh, *Untitled [Ilmu Akhirat]*, pp. 4–5.
93. Ibid., p. 6.
94. Tengku Su, *Ilmu Penyakit* (Trengganu, n.d.), accessible as *Malay 129* at the RAS, pp. 5, 22–3, 64; *Kitab Ubat-Ubat Melayu* (Kuala Trengganu, 1954), accessible as *Malay 131* at the RAS, pp. 1–2.
95. Su, *Ilmu Penyakit*, pp. 4, 34, 37–9, 45, 56; *Rejang Ketika dari Kelantan* (n.p., 1928), accessible as *Malay 127* at the RAS, pp. 17, 50, 86, 115, 147; *Kitab Ta'bir, Nujum, Raksi dan Hubatan Hikmat*, (Malacca, 1893), accessible as *MS 37076* at SOAS, Ibrahim Loyar, pp. 80–81; *Untitled [Book of Charms formerly belonging to a Sultan Muda of Perak and given to R. O. Winstedt by Raja Haji Yahya of Chendriang]* (n.p., n.d.), accessible as 25027/2 at the School of Oriental and African Studies, pp. 2, 6, 17, 26.
96. Loyar, *Kitab Ta'bir, Nujum, Raksi dan Hubatan Hikmat*, p. 81; Su, *Ilmu Penyakit*, pp. 23, 36, 39; *Kitab ubat-ubat Melayu*, pp. 1–2; *Book of Charms Formerly Belonging to a Sultan Muda of Perak*, pp. 2, 6, 17, 26.
97. Su, *Ilmu Penyakit*, pp. 5, 22–3; *Kitab Ubat-Ubat Melayu*, pp. 1–2.
98. *Kitab Ta'bir, Nujum, Raksi dan Hubatan Hikmat* (op. cit.).
99. Su, *Ilmu Penyakit*.
100. *Kitab Ubat-Ubat Melayu* (op. cit.).
101. *Rejang Ketika dari Kelantan* (op. cit.).
102. *Book of Charms Formerly Belonging to a Sultan Muda of Perak* (op. cit.).
103. *Rejang ketika dari Kelantan*, p. 115.

9. 'THEY ARE THE HEIRS OF THE PROPHET': DISCOURSES ON THE *AHL AL-BAYT* AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AMONG THE BĀ ʿALAWĪ IN MODERN INDONESIA

1. Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity* (Reading, 1997), pp. xxi-xxii.
2. R. B. Serjeant, *The Saiyids of Hadramawt* (London, 1957); Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, CA, 2006).
3. Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, pp. 41–7.

4. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, *al-Nasāiḥ al-dīniyya wa al-waṣāyā al-īmāniyya* (Tarim, 1994).
5. R. Michael Feener, 'New Networks and New Knowledge: Migration, Communications and the Refiguration of Muslim Community in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in Robert W. Hefner, ed., *The New Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 2010), vol. 6, pp. 38–9.
6. Michael F. Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds* (London, 2003).
7. Ulrike Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut: Reforming the Homeland* (Leiden, 2003), p. 227.
8. Ibid.
9. L. W. C. van den Berg, *Hadramaut dan Koloni Arab di Nusantara*, tr. Rahayu Hidayat (Jakarta, 1989), p. 124.
10. Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900–1942*.(Ithaca, NY, 1999), pp. 54–5.
11. In Sufism, spiritual tasting (*dhawq*) refers to certain aspects of the experiential character of the mystical journey as every wayfaring has its own characteristic taste, signature, flavour and quality. Over time, a Sufi adept develops a sense of taste of the experiential character of various spiritual dimensions.
12. In reconstructing his biography, I am using ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAṭṭās, *Tāj al-aʿrās ʿalā manāqib al-Ḥabīb al-Quṭb Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAṭṭās* (Kudus, 1979).
13. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Tāj al-Aʿrās*, vol. 2, p. 41.
14. Abd Allāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās min al-durar wa al-yāqūt wa al-almās min azkā al-anfās* (n.d.), manuscript, collection of Markaz al-Nūr, Tarim, Hadramawt. All quoted excerpts are my own translation of the original Arabic text.
15. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās*, pp. 25–6. I have found a reference to this occurrence in a Shiʿi work, *Kitāb al-Irshād* of al-Shaykh al-Mufid. The report is as follows: al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them, were wrestling in front of the Apostle of God. 'Ḥasan, catch hold of Ḥusayn (*khuḍ al-Ḥusaynā*)', said the Apostle of God. 'Apostle of God, are you encouraging the big one against the little one?', said Fāṭima. The Apostle of God said, 'It is Gabriel, who is saying to al-Ḥusayn: 'Ḥusayn, catch hold of al-Ḥasan.' See al-Shaykh al-Mufid, *Kitāb al-Irshād fi maʿrifa hujjaj Allāh ʿalā al-ʿibād* (Tehran, 1957) vol. 2, p. 128.
16. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (b.1843) was a leading Bā ʿAlawī scholar and poet who founded the religious academy in Seiyun, Hadramawt. See Abū Bakr ʿAdnī al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmi' al-nūr: nukhba min aʿlām Hadramawt* (San'a, 1991), pp. 197–9.
17. Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās (b.1841) was a Bā ʿAlawī scholar who was also the leader (*manṣab*) of the al-ʿAṭṭās family. See ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās, *Tarjuma shaykh al-islām wa qudwa al-sālikīn al-Ḥabīb Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās* (privately printed, 1959), pp. 6–56.
18. This is a reference to the Qur'anic verse on the Prophet's night journey that states: 'Glory to (God) Who did take His servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque [...]' (17:1).
19. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās*, p. 81.
20. Ibid., p. 30.
21. Ibid., p. 41.
22. Vincent J. Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin, TX, 1998), p. 198.

23. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās*, p. 55.
24. The reference here is to the Qur'an 33:33: 'And Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye members of the Family, and to make you pure and spotless.'
25. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās*, pp. 69–70.
26. Ibid., p. 70.
27. While the love implied by Ibn Muḥsin here is certainly of a more spiritual than physical nature, there is also a possibility of links between this notion of spiritual transformation and the more corporeal elaborations of this ideal in established vernacular traditions, such as those discussed by Faried Saenong and Teren Sevea in their respective chapters.
28. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Wizanāt al-qisṭās*, p. 35.
29. Ibid., pp. 80–81.
30. Kazuhiro Arai, *The Arabs Who Traversed the Indian Ocean: The History of the al-ʿAṭṭas Family in Hadramawt and Southeast Asia, c.1600–c.1960*, PhD thesis, University of Michigan (2004), pp. 201–2.
31. Ibid., p. 202.
32. Ibid., p. 203.
33. Ibid., p. 205.
34. Al-ʿAṭṭās, *Tāj al-Aʿrās*, vol. 2, pp. 47–8.
35. Ibid., p. 48.
36. As early as 1941, several Muslim scholars established the Lajnah Ahli-ahli Hadith Indonesia (Commitee of Hadith Scholars of Indonesia) in Solo. In addition, the Muslim reformist Ahmad Hassan produced an annotated translation of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalāni's *Bulūgh al-marām*, which is a critical text of *ḥadīth* studies among Sunni scholars. See R. Michael Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge, 2007) p. 48.
37. Ibid.
38. Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia* (Crows Nest, 2004) p. 152.
39. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-zahīra fi nasb ahl al-bayt min banī ʿalawī furūʿ Fāṭima al-zahrā wa amīr al-muʾminīn ʿAlī* (Jeddah, 1984), vol. 1, p. 297.
40. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Dubayān, 'Kitāb Rawḍa al-Wildān li Sālim b. Jindān: Dirāsa Naqdiyya Taḥlīliyya', *Islamic Quarterly*, 47 (2003), pp. 234–5.
41. Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Zāhīra*, vol. 1, p. 298.
42. Drg. H. Muhammad Syamsu As, *Ulama Pembawa Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1999), p. 270.
43. Sālim b. Aḥmad Ibn Jindān al-ʿAlawī al-Shāfiʿī al-Indūnīsī, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt bi faḍl ahl al-bayt* (Jakarta, n.d.), manuscript copied from the al-Fakhriyah Library. All quoted excerpts are my own translation of the original Arabic text.
44. By the verse of purification, Ibn Jindān means the part of the 33rd verse of Sura al-Ahzāb of the Qur'an, which says: 'God only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you O *ahl al-bayt*! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying' (33:33).
45. Ibn Jindān, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt*, p. 2. Regarding the verse of purification, see note 28.
46. Abdulmalik Abdulkarim Amrullah, *Tafsir al-Azhar* (Singapore, 1990), vol. 8, p. 5711; Hasbi Ash Shiddiqi, *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Majid* (Semarang, 1995), vol. 4, p. 3176. Such an attempt at subsuming the wives of the Prophet as part of the *ahl al-bayt* has been an established practice among Sunni scholars to downplay the unique eminence of Fāṭima, ʿAlī and their two sons. See Wendy Mukherjee's chapter in this volume for an example of such a discursive strategy.

47. Ibn Jindān, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt*, p. 3.
48. Ibid, pp. 3–4.
49. Ibid., p. 5.
50. The verse states: 'It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision [...]' (33:36).
51. Ibn Jindān, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt*, p. 7.
52. Ibid., p. 8.
53. Ibid., p. 9.
54. Ibid., p. 13.
55. Ibid., p. 17.
56. Ibid., pp. 19–20.
57. Ibid., p. 23.
58. Al-Ḥaṭīm is a semi-circular wall opposite, but unconnected, to the north-west wall of the Kaʿba.
59. Ibn Jindān, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt*, p. 24.
60. Ibid.
61. The *ḥadīth* states: I am leaving for you two precious and weighty symbols that if you adhere to both of them you shall not go astray after me. They are the Book of God, and my progeny (*al-ʿitra*). The Merciful has informed me that these two shall not separate from each other till they come to me by the Pool. This *ḥadīth* is reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book 31, *ḥadīth* 5920.
62. Ibn Jindān, *Iḥyāʾ al-mayt*, p. 26.
63. Unfortunately, I do not have access to the original Arabic. Here, I am relying on the Indonesian translation published in 1997. See Salim b. Ahmad Ibn Jindan, *Fatwa Isu Penting: Putusan Ulama Besar Indonesia*, tr. Achmad Sunarto (Semarang, 1997).
64. Ibn Jindan, *Fatwa Isu Penting*, p. 1.
65. Ibid., p. 11.
66. Ibid., p. 12.
67. Ibid., p. 22.
68. Ibid., p. 24.
69. Paul Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 142.
70. Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufis and Anti-Sufis: The Defence, Rethinking and Rejection of Sufism in the Modern World* (London, 1999).
71. Alexander Knysh, 'The Tariqa on a Landcruiser: The Resurgence of Sufism in Yemen', *Middle East Journal*, 55 (2001), pp. 399–414.
72. See Syed Farid Alatas, 'The Tariqat al-ʿAlawiyyah and the Emergence of the Shiʿi School in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Oriente Moderno*, 79 (1999) pp. 323–39; Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiʿis in Indonesia*, PhD thesis, Leiden University (2009). See also the last three chapters of this volume.
73. Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiʿis*, p. 306.
74. Ibid., p. 309.
75. Jindan b. Nawfal Jindan, *Qul Hadzihi Sabīlī: Katakanlah, Inilah Jalanku* (Tangerang, 2007), p. 2. All quoted excerpts are my own translation of the original Indonesian text.
76. Ibid., p. 4.
77. Ibid., p. 5.
78. Ibid., p. 7.

79. Ibid., p. 12.
80. Ibid., pp. 14–15.
81. Ibid., p. 16.
82. Ibid., p. 18.
83. Ibid., p. 18.
84. Ibid., pp. 21–3.
85. For more on this, see Umar Assegaf's chapter in this volume.

10. LOCATING THE DESCENDANTS OF ʿALĪ IN SOUTH-WEST ACEH: THE PLACES OF ʿALID PIETY IN LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY SEUNAGAN

1. I would like to thank all the participants of the workshop on 'Shiʿism and Beyond: "Alid Piety in Muslim Southeast Asia', held at the National University of Singapore, 14–15 January 2010, for their comments on the conference paper that developed into this chapter. I would also like to thank Ismail Alatas for help on several specific questions, as well as Michael Feener, Nancy Florida, Chiara Formichi, Webb Keane, Esteban Rozo Pabon, Guillermo Salas, Annemarie Samuels, Nafisa Essop Sheik and Stephen Sparks for their careful readings and critiques of early drafts of this chapter. All errors and shortcomings are my own. All dates in this paper are Common Era.
2. In this chapter, I use the term ʿAlid loyalism when specifically referring to Hodgson's concept, and ʿAlid piety when referring to my own deployment of ideas contained within Hodgson's definition.
3. L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah: A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975), pp. 58–63.
4. Ibid., p. 59.
5. Ibid.
6. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, 'How did the Early Shīʿa become Sectarian?' *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 75 (1959), pp. 1–13; Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago, 1974), vol. 1, p. 372. At its most basic level, the split between Sunnī and Shiʿī groups revolves around the question of succession to the leadership of the Islamic community following the death of the Prophet Muḥammad. Shiʿī groups supported ʿAlī, the Prophet's son-in-law, as the rightful claimant, while Sunnīs recognised Abu Bakr.
7. The unidirectionality of these waves of Islamic persons and ideas, even in the earliest periods, when Islam was taking hold in the Malay world, has been explicitly questioned in a suggestive article by R. Michael Feener and Michael F. Laffan; see R. Michael Feener and Michael F. Laffan, 'Sufi Scents across the Indian Ocean: Yemeni Hagiography and the Earliest History of Southeast Asian Islam', *Archipel*, 70 (2005), pp. 185–208. There should no longer be any question that in later periods, persons and ideas flowed both to and from the Malay-speaking archipelago and peninsula. For a few sources, see C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning: The Moslims of the East-Indian-Archipelago*, tr. J. H. Monahan (Leiden–London, 1931); Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds* (London–New York, 2003); Engseng Ho, 'Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46 (2004), pp. 210–46; Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley–Los Angeles–London,

2006). For a recent general critique of the idea of unidirectional waves of Islamic influence from west to east, see R. Michael Feener, 'Introduction: Issues and Ideologies in the Study of Regional Muslim Cultures', in R. Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea, eds., *Islamic Connections: Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 2009), pp. xiii-xxiii.

8. For a particularly instructive post-colonial instance that deals explicitly with Shiʿism, see A. Hasjmy, *Syiʿah dan Ahlussunnah: Saling Rebut Dan Kekuasaan Sejak Awal Sejarah Islam Di Kepulauan Nusantara* (Surabaya, 1983).
9. On the Islamic tradition as constituted by debate over orthodoxy, and a critique of the way in which anthropologists and other scholars have approached this tradition, see Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, DC, 1986).
10. For two particularly insightful treatments of this topic, see Nancy K. Florida, 'Writing Traditions in Colonial Java: the Question of Islam', in S. C. Humphreys, ed., *Cultures of Scholarship* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1997), pp. 187–218; William R. Roff, 'Islam Obscured? Some Reflections on Studies of Islam in Southeast Asia', *Archipel*, 29 (1985), pp. 7–34.
11. Brakel himself comes very close to acknowledging this point in his discussion of the *tabot*, in which he, following C. Snouck Hurgronje, suggests that one of the reasons for the elaborate *tabot* rituals on Sumatra's west coast is their affinity to already existing religious sensibilities that he identifies as Shiʿī; see Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*, pp. 62–3.
12. Generally, *sayyids* claim biological descent through male lines, from among the close relatives of the Prophet Muḥammad, most often ʿAlī, who was married to the Prophet's daughter, Fāṭima.
13. When spelling Acehnese terms, unless otherwise noted, I have followed Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Atjehsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek* (Batavia, 1934). However, here I follow a common contemporary spelling of *dayah*, instead of that recorded in Djajadiningrat. Transliterating terms related to Islamic discourse and practice in Southeast Asia raises special challenges because such terms often have multiple related forms in Indonesian, local languages such as Acehnese, and Arabic. Here I use standard Indonesian, or Acehnese forms following Djajadiningrat's transliterations, whenever I employ a term that, in the context of this paper, I draw from twentieth-century Southeast Asian ethnographic and historical contexts. Where appropriate I include transliterations of the related Arabic term in parenthesis following the local term to indicate that the local term participates in the same semantic field as the related Arabic term. In instances where I employ a term that is, for the purposes of this chapter, not linked primarily to a Southeast Asian context, and instead circulates more widely in Islamic traditions of learning and practice, I employ an Arabic transliteration.
14. Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*. On the *nūr Muḥammad*, which was central to the cosmologies suggested by the twelfth- and thirteenth-century mystic, Ibn ʿArabī, and which became especially influential in later Islamic mystical thought, see Abul Ela Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muḥyid Dīn-Ibnul ʿArabī* (New York, 1974); U. Rubin, 'Nūr Muḥammadī', in *EI2*, available online at: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-5985 (accessed 18 August 2010); J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (New York–Oxford, 1971), pp. 133–65. Ho's account deals explicitly with these themes, and is among the most recent studies to do so. However, they have been treated in other places and contexts, and in different configurations, by other scholars. For a few instances, see Vincent Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin, TX, 1998); Michael Gilsenan, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*

(London–New York, 1982); Valerie J. Hoffman-Ladd, 'Devotion to the Prophet and His Family in Egyptian Sufism', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 24 (1992), pp. 615–37. I have chosen to use Ho here as an interlocutor, not only because his account is recent, but because the ʿAlawi Sayyids are numerically significant and visible in Indonesian society. Especially since a project documenting their genealogies, widely supported by the ʿAlawi in the region, has continued to grow, I think it is impossible not to acknowledge the great influence their example wields in formulating contemporary expressions of ʿAlid piety in the archipelago.

15. For an earlier account of the Habib Seunagan that is consistent with my own in several significant ways, most notably in its articulation of the family's authority in terms of genealogical and mystical descent, see John R. Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia: The Social Meanings of an Islamic Ritual', *Man*, 24 (1989), pp. 602–4. A *ṭarīqa* is a complex of mystical discourse and practice, usually conceptualised as passing esoteric knowledge from a spiritual founder or paramount figure to successive generations of followers. The term is often glossed as a 'Sufi order'.
16. Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*, p. 324.
17. See also Sammina Daud, *Abu Habib Muda Seunagan and Thariqat Syattariyah* (Jakarta, 2009), pp. 24–6. This official biography of the Habib Muda, whom I discuss in greater detail below, was published very shortly after I left Seunagan in June 2009. In this article, I cite from a proof copy given to me by the grandson of the Habib Muda for the purposes of my research.
18. The *wali songo* are credited with converting all of Java to Islam, and are central figures in popular Islamic piety throughout Java. That they are claimed as ancestors here, in an Acehnese context, is peculiar in ways that I discuss below. On the *wali songo*, see Nancy K. Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java* (Durham–London, 1995); D. A. Rinkes, *Nine Saints of Java*, tr. H. M. Froger (Kuala Lumpur, 1996).
19. Based on stories told regarding Habib Abdurrahim, his contemporaries and their descendants, it seems that he was active in the period just before the Dutch–Aceh war, and I thus place him around the middle of the 19th century. See also Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia', pp. 602–4; C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, tr. Arthur Warren Swete O'Sullivan (Leiden, 1906), vol. 2, p. 14.
20. Both of these terms have important resonances in Islamic mystical discourses. I elaborate on these resonances below, describing how their meanings within broader mystical cosmologies are related to the Habib Seunagan's claims to, and exercise of, their various social positions.
21. The eleventh- and twelfth-century figure, Syeikh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlanī, is one of the most preeminent historical personages in Islamic mystical circles. Believed to be the founder of the *ṭarīqa* that bears his name, Qādiriyya, he is revered throughout the world for his mystical prowess and esoteric knowledge, and many consider him to be without an equal. He is also believed to be a *Sayyid*; see W. Braune, '"Abd al-Ḳādir al-Jīlānī (or al-Jīlī), Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Muḥ. b. Abī Ṣāliḥ Jengī Dōst', in *EI2*, available online at: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-0095 (accessed 27 April 2010); Martin van Bruinessen, 'Tarekat Qadiriyah dan Ilmu Syeikh Abdul Qadir Jilani di India, Kurdistan, dan Indonesia', *Ulumul Qur'an*, 2 (1989), pp. 68–77.
22. See Appendix.

23. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 227–30; Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, pp. 133–65.
24. The *silsila* of Shaṭṭāriyya shaykhs tend to run through several of ʿAlī's descendants, from his son, Ḥusayn, through to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, who is generally taken to be one of the key intellectual founding figures of Imāmī Shiʿism and the sixth imām. This is true, for instance, of both the *silsila* held by the Acehnese, ʿAbd al-Raʾūf, and the Makasarese, Shaykh Yūsuf, seventeenth-century figures who are among the most important and paradigmatic Shaṭṭāriyya shaykhs in the Malay world; see Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII: Melacak Akar-Akar Pembaruan Pemikiran Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung, 1999), pp. 189–239; Oman Fathurahman, *Tanbīh al-Māsyī Menyoal Wahdatul Wujud: Kasus Abdurrauf Singkil di Aceh Abad 17* (Bandung, 1999); Oman Fathurahman, *Tarekat Syattariyah di Minangkabau: Teks dan Konteks* (Jakarta, 2008); Daud, *Abu Habib Muda*.
25. Daud, *Abu Habib Muda*, pp. 190–91.
26. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raʾūf is a primary link in the *silsila* of a Shaṭṭāriyya complex in Minangkabau, a region to the south of Aceh; see Fathurahman, *Tarekat Syattariyah*.
27. On Ḥamza Fanṣūrī and *wujudiyah* more generally, see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyah of 17th Century Acheh* (Singapore, 1966); Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur, 1970); G. W. J. Drewes and L. F. Brakel, ed. and tr., *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri* (Dordrecht, 1986); Florida, *Writing the Past*.
28. On *al-Durr al-Nafīs* and al-Banjārī, see Martin van Bruinessen, 'Nafis al-Banjari', *Dictionnaire Biographique des Savants et Grandes Figures du Monde Musulman Périphérique, du XIXe Siècle à Nos Jours* (Paris, 1998), pp. 24–5.
29. The recently published biography of the Habib Muda closes with an extensive section in which the specific methods of *zikir* employed by the Thariqat Syattariyah are described and explained at length; see Daud, *Abu Habib Muda*, pp. 189–235. For a comparison of different forms of Syattariyah practice prescribed in several different texts, each popular in different parts of the archipelago, see Fathurahman, *Tarekat Syattariyah*, pp. 180–85.
30. For a few examples, see Cornell, *Realms of the Saint*; Valerie Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics, and Saints in Modern Egypt* (Columbia, 1995); Pnina Werbner, *Pilgrims of Love: The Anthropology of a Global Sufi Cult* (Oxford, 2003).
31. See also Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia', pp. 602–3.
32. Rubin, 'Nūr Muḥammadī'.
33. Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia', pp. 602–4; Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, vol. 2, p. 14; 'Surat Menyurat Masalah Keamanan tentang Laporan Pidato Dr. H. Muhibbudin Wali MA Tahun 1970 dan Pidato Zulkarnaini Pada Upacara Nuzuluy Qur'an Thn. 1962 dan Pidato T. Usman Bakar', no. 95, box 10, *Kec. Seunagan Dati II Aceh Barat*, Arsip Propinsi, Banda Aceh.
34. Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, vol. 2, p. 14. For the Zaidiyya and their relationship to Shiʿism, see W. Madelung, 'Zaydiyya', in *EI2*, available online at: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_OOM.1385 (accessed 27 April 2010).
35. For one description of the terms of the confrontation between the Habib Seunagan and adherents to a particular type of reformism, see Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia', pp. 602–4.
36. For a few examples, see Muhammad Adlin Sila, 'The Festivity of Maulid Nabi in Cikoang, South Sulawesi: Between Remembering and Exaggerating the Spirit of the Prophet', *Studia Islamika*, 8 (2001), pp. 1–56; Ulrike Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith, eds., *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesman in the Indian Ocean, 1750–1960s* (Leiden, 1997); Ho,

'Empire through Diasporic Eyes'; Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*; Anthony Reid, 'Habib Abdur-Rahman Az-Zahir, (1833–1896)', *Indonesia*, 13 (1972), pp. 37–59.

37. John R. Bowen, 'Narrative Form and Political Incorporation: Changing Uses of History in Aceh, Indonesia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 31 (1989), pp. 671–93.
38. Ibid., p. 686. The concept of the 'chronotope' deployed by Bowen is discussed in Mikhail M. Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination*, tr. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX, 1984), pp. 84–258.
39. Bowen, 'Narrative Form'; A. Hasymy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia: Kumpulan Prasaran pada Seminar di Aceh* (Medan, 1989); Panitia Penyelenggara Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an Tingkat Nasional ke-12, *Dari Sini Ia Bersemi* (Banda Aceh, 1981); Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan, 1980), pp. 53–81.
40. Bowen, 'Narrative Form'; Bowen, '*Salat* in Indonesia', pp. 602–4.
41. A particularly instructive example is Hasjmy, 'Syi'ah dan Ahlussunah'.
42. Daud, *Abu Habib Muda*, p. 24.
43. Aceh remained an independent sultanate until 1873, when it was invaded by the Dutch following a shift in diplomatic and treaty relations between the Netherlands and Great Britain, which had, to this point, prevented Dutch attempts to force Aceh's incorporation into the colony of the Dutch East Indies. The Dutch–Aceh War was long and brutal, continuing into the first decade of the twentieth century. Even after this point, sporadic violence regularly arose until the Japanese invasion of 1942; see Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands, and Britain, 1858–1898*.(Kuala Lumpur, 1969); James Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2000), pp. 68–77.
44. 'Lapuran Tahunan Pemerintahan Umum dan Otonomi Daerah Ketj. Seunagan Tahun 1962', no. 13, box 1, *Kec. Seunagan Dati II Aceh Barat*, Arsip Propinsi, Banda Aceh.
45. John R. Bowen, *Islam, Law and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 1–63; Florida, *Writing the Past*, pp. 1–51; Daniel S. Lev, 'Colonial Law and the Genesis of the Indonesia State', *Indonesia*, 40 (1985), pp. 57–74; Patricia Spyer, 'Diversity with a Difference: *Adat* and the New Order in Aru (Eastern Indonesia)', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11 (1996), pp. 25–50; Mary Margaret Steedly, *Hanging Without a Rope: Narrative Experience in Colonial and Post-Colonial Karoland* (Princeton, NJ, 1993), pp. 44–77.
46. Daud, *Abu Habib Muda*, pp. 65–8.
47. For one insightful analysis of a particular version of the story of the Demak mosque's construction, see Florida, *Writing the Past*, pp. 319–51.
48. This resembles in several respects the response of some Gayo intellectuals to the same narrative form. See Bowen, 'Narrative Form', pp. 687–90.

11. 'ALID PIETY AND STATE-SPONSORED SPECTACLE: *TABOT* TRADITION IN BENGKULU, SUMATRA

1. William Milburn, *Oriental Commerce* (London, 1813), vol. 1, pp. xxxvi.
2. C. E. Würtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles* (London, 1954), p. 428.
3. Despite this, however, security continued to be a serious problem as can be seen from a dispatch of 1705, wherein the council of York Fort (Bencoolen) refused to reduce the number of soldiers stationed there, 'not being willing, as they said, to have their throats cut'; see F. C. Danvers, 'The English Connection with Sumatra', *The Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 1 (1886),

p. 418. Things continued in a similar vein through the revolt of 1719, when Fort Marlborough was captured and the British were driven into the sea by a local uprising. Similar incidents plagued Bencoolen throughout its administration by the British, culminating in the 1805 murder of Resident Thomas Parr in a midnight attack on his home by a group of local Malays.

4. Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Minneapolis, 1976), p. 237. We also find mention of traders from Malabar arriving at Bengkulu in the *Asal-Oesoel Bangkahulu*, Patsal 32. This manuscript exists in two copies listed in van Ronkel's *Catalogus* as numbers 367 (Bat. Gen./Ml. 143) and 368 (Bat. Gen./Ml. 148). He identifies them as being 'identical', but there are actually several variations, the most immediately apparent being that the former is written in the Arabic, and the latter, in the Latin script. The cataloguer has mistakenly recorded that both are in the Latin script and that the *silsila* of Sungai Lemau is attached to the former, when it is actually appended to the latter. Ph. S. van Ronkel, *Catalogus der Maleische Handschriften in het Museum van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (Batavia, 1909), p. 280.
5. Benjamin Heyne, *Tracts, Historical and Statistical, on India; with Journals of Several Tours through Various Parts of the Peninsula, Also an Account of Sumatra, in a Series of Letters* (London, 1814), p. 386. Quoted in John Bastin, *The British in West Sumatra 1685–1825*. (Kuala Lumpur, 1965), pp. 142–143.
6. John Bastin, *British in West Sumatra*, n. 108—Or. 1797, according to Sir Stamford Raffles in a letter to the Court of Directors of 27 April 1818, published in Sophia Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles F.R.S. and c. Particularly in the Government of Java, 1811–1816, and of Bencoolen and Its Dependencies, 1817–1824; with Details of the Commerce and Resources of the Eastern Archipelago, and Selections from His Correspondence* (London, 1830), p. 298.
7. John Frederick Adolphus McNair, *Prisoners Their Own Warders* (London, 1899), p. 1. The author reminded us that this was about the same time that Australia became a site of transportation for English convicts.
8. Bastin, *British in West Sumatra*, n. 108.
9. From a letter dated 20 December of that year from Sir Stamford Raffles to the government; quoted in McNair, *Prisoners Their Own Warders*, p. 7.
10. The earliest document we have pertaining to such reforms of the colonial penal system is a letter from Raffles at Bencoolen in 1818, entitled 'Raffles to Government, 1818'. This letter was first reproduced in Raffles, *Memoir*, pp. 297–9, and later quoted in McNair, *Prisoners Their Own Warders*, pp. 4–6.
11. Among the 16 species in the genus *Rafflesia*, the largest and most famous *Rafflesia Arnoldii* is native to the environs of Bengkulu. As such, it has become iconic of local identity.
12. William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra* (Oxford, 1966).
13. Marsden, *History*, pp. 43 ff. He chose as his 'standard' the Rejang, who inhabit the mountain district just outside Bengkulu. To this day, the observance of *tabot* is not recognised by them and is viewed as a 'city' festival with associations to foreign Muslims from India.
14. S. A. Buddingh, *Neêrlands-Oost-Indië, Reizen over Java, Madura, Macassar, enz*. (Rotterdam, 1859–61), vol. 3, pp. 136–7. There, he makes particular mention of the collection of money for the *tabot's* construction and the *duduk penja* observances.
15. This text, entitled *Cerita Dari Tabut*, is now held in the Perpustakaan Nasional, Jakarta, and is listed in van Ronkel's *Catalogus der Maleische Handschriften in het Museum van het Bat-*

aviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen as no. 334, p. 255. A transliteration of the text has been published in: Jumsari Yusuf, Aisyah Ibrahim, Nikmah A. Soenardjo, and Hani'ah, *Sastra Indonesia Lama Pengaruh Islam* (Jakarta, 1984), pp. 124–30.

16. O. C. Helfrich, 'Het Hasan-Hosein- of Taboet-feest te Benkoelen', in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie (Archieves Internationales d'Ethnography)* (Leiden, 1888), pp. 191–6.
17. For example, see Th. Delprat, 'Viering van het Moharram- of Hassan-Hoessein-feest', *Eigen Haard*; *geillustreed volkstijdschrift* (Haarlem, 1889), pp. 480–84; P. J. Veth, 'Hassan-Hosein- of Taboetfeest', *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie/Archieves Internationales d'Ethnography*, 3 (1890), pp. 194–5; C. van der Pol, 'De Hassan-Hoessin-feesten in Nederlandsch-Indië', *Vragenvan den dag*; *maandschrift voor nederland en koloniën op het gebeid van staathuishoundkunde en staatsleven, natuurwetenschappen enz*., 16 (1901), pp. 223–46.
18. Ph. S. van Ronkel, 'Nadere gegevens omtrent het Hasan-Hoesain feest', *Tijdschrift voor Indische taal-, land- en volkenkunde*, 56 (Batavia, 1914), pp. 334–45.
19. 'Der Taboet-feesten, die niet vele jaren meer zullen duren, [...]'; ibid., p. 344.
20. For example, see *Memperkenalkan Propinsi Bengkulu di Indonesia* (Bengkulu, 1977); *Adat Istiadat Daerah Bengkulu* (Bengkulu, 1977–8); Fakhri Bustaman, *Naskah Kesenian Tradisional 'Tabot' di Daerah Bengkulu* (Bengkulu, 1980); Ronald Pohan, *Experimentasi Seni Musik Dol dan Tasa di Bengkulu* (1986–7); Badrul Munir Hamidy, ed., *Upacara Tradisional Daerah Bengkulu: Upacara Tabot di Kotamadya Bengkulu* (Bengkulu, 1991–2).
21. The following description is based primarily upon notes made during Muḥarram 1413/July 1992. This was my second extended stay in Bengkulu, as I was fortunate enough to have also attended *tabot* observances there the year before Muḥarram 1412/July 1991. I have since also had the chance to join the *tabot* observances again in Muḥarram 1419/April–May 1998.
22. Such 'local Karbalā's' are also the object of Muḥarram processions in India. Syed Husain Ali Jaffri, 'Muharram Ceremonies in India', in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., *Taʿziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York, 1979), p. 224. The earth from Karbalā', or from places ritually associated with the plain of martyrs, plays an important part in Shiʿī ritual throughout the Muslim world. Tablets made from such clay are a common souvenir which pilgrims bring home from their visits to Ḥusayn's grave, and Shiʿa in many parts of the world touch their heads to such tablets at each *sujud* during their daily prayers. In many variants of South and Southeast Asian Muḥarram tradition, small amounts of earth are used to represent soil from the battlefield of Karbalā'. The text of one Muḥarram drama recorded by Pelly in the mid-nineteenth century quotes Ḥusayn himself as saying, 'The dust raised in the field of such battles is as highly esteemed by me, O sister, as the philosopher's stone was, in former times, by the alchemists, and the soil of Karbala is the sure remedy of my inward pains'; see Lewis Pelly, *The Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain* (London, 1879), p. 86. According to other traditions, a small jar of earth was given to the Prophet by Jibrāʿīl, which forecast the death of the former's beloved grandson by turning to blood. This is a fairly widespread story that can be found in the Malay edition of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*; see L. F. Brakel, *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah: A Medieval Muslim–Malay Romance* (The Hague, 1975), p. 62. In her study of Barus, also on the west coast of Sumatra, Jane Drakard points to a possible link between this rite and the earth/water weighing motif as found in the Hilir chronicle and elsewhere in the Malay literary tradition; see Jane Drakard, *A Malay Frontier: Unity and Duality in a Sumatran Kingdom* (Ithaca, NY, 1990), p. 75.
23. Referred to as *doerga* in older sources such as Helfrich, 'Het Hasan-Hosein- of Taboet-feest'. This reveals the link to the *dargah* of the Indian subcontinent, which are centres of devo-

tion dedicated to Muslim saints. For more on *dargah*, see the essays collected in Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History, and Significance* (Delhi, 1989).

24. He is also known locally as Imam Senggolo. The identity of this Shaykh Burhanuddin is, however, often conflated with that of the saint of the same name buried further up the west coast of Sumatra at Ulakan, in the vicinity of Pariaman, where the *tabot* (known locally as *tabuik*) is also observed in a fashion similar to that at Bengkulu. This type of conflation continues even in the most recent Indonesian book published on the subject of *tabot*. See, for example, Harapandi Dahri, *Tabot: Jejak Cinta Keluarga Nabi di Bengkulu* (Jakarta, 2009), pp. 15, 150, 64 and 100. However, the saint of Ulakan is more commonly identified as a seventeenth-century disciple of the Shaṭṭariyya Sufi Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raʾuf Singkel, and his origins are generally traced to the ruling houses of Aceh or Pagaruyung, rather than to the ranks of the Sepoys. See Havid Tanjung, 'Kaum Adat Akhirnya Terima Agama Islam', *Haluan Minggu*, 10 (1987), p. 10; Syaf Amirzaid, 'Menliti Riwayat Syech Burhanuddin, Tokoh Ulama Minangkabau Abad XVII', *Singgalang Minggu*, 232, Tahun XV (31 July 1983), p. 1. For more on that Shaykh Burhanuddin and his shrine at Ulakan, see Ph. S. van Ronkel, 'Het heiligdom te Oelakan', *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, 64 (1914), pp. 281–316. For local traditions about his role in the Islamisation of Minangkabau lands, see M. Joustra, *Minangkabau: Overzicht van Land, Geschiedenis en Volk* ('s-Gravenhage, 1923), pp. 138ff. Popular practices at his grave in Pariaman were recorded and criticised in HAMKA (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah), *Sedjarah Islam di Sumatera* (Medan, 1950), pp. 24ff.
25. This apparent misconnection of characters from two very distinct stories of Muslim tradition is in no way peculiar to Bengkulu, as we find links between Ḥusayn's martyrdom and the *miʿraj* documented elsewhere, such as the Sindh, where we find such poetical references as: 'The Prince has made his meʿraj on the ground of Kerbela//The Shah's horse has gained the rank of Buraq [...]', and 'Today the Shah of Kerbela has mounted his horse//Just as though Mustafa were mounting the Buraq today'; see Annemarie Schimmel, 'The Marsiyeh in Sindhi Poetry', in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., *Taʿziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York, 1979), pp. 212–13. Elsewhere, Pelly records Husayn's ride on a 'winged steed', although named here as '*zúʿl janáh*' and not Buraq; see Pelly, *Miracle Play*, p. 85. More extensive comparisons between the *tabot* and Muḥarram observances in various parts of South Asia can be found in R. Michael Feener, 'Muharram Observances in the History of Bengkulu', *Studia Islamika*, 6 (1999), pp. 87–130.
26. A transcription of the music accompanying the *ikan-ikan* (fish) dance can be found in *Ensiklopedi Musik dan Tari Daerah Bengkulu*, p. 68
27. The popular entertainment aspects of Muḥarram traditions in Southeast Asia are discussed further in Jan van der Putten's contribution to this volume.
28. In addition to the two 'permanent' cement *gergah* in the neighbourhood of Berkas and behind Fort Marlborough, numerous 'temporary' ones are constructed out of bamboo, thatch and plastic tarps for the duration of the *tabot* observances. In 1992, there were 17 *gergah* in Bengkulu, of which their spread to the more outlying areas possibly reflects the incorporation of larger portions of the city's population into the 'Festival', as well as general urban expansion.
29. The most prominent grave at the site is that of Syech Burhanuddin, the figure traditionally

identified as the Sepoy primarily responsible for the introduction of the *tabot* tradition to Bengkulu.

30. 'The Development of Indonesian Culture'; see *Apa dan Siapa Indonesia Indah* (Jakarta, 1975), p. 18.
31. *Apa dan Siapa*, p. 17.
32. The *tabot* also received special mention in other departmental publications on related areas such as music and dance, and from the 1970s the *tabot* was specifically mentioned in relation to 'the culture of Bengkulu' in national census reports and gazetteers such as the *Indonesia Membangun*. The classifications of this genre were defined during the colonial era, and they continue to have important implications.
33. 'Tabot Bukan Upacara Keagamaan', *Harian Semarak*, 246, Tahun ke-6 (Senin, 6 July 1992), pp. 1, 12.
34. I have discussed the issue of the way in which the revival of the *tabot* tradition figured in New Order cultural politics more extensively in Feener, 'Muḥarram Observances'.
35. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 11. Such an 'undefined universality' increases the degree to which individual participants are able to attribute 'multiple meanings' to the same ritualised activity. For a discussion of this within the context of the Muḥarram tradition in Trinidad, see Frank J. Korom and Peter Chelkowski, 'A Festive Mourning: Moharram in Trinidad', *The India Magazine*, 13 (1993), pp. 54–63.
36. Such Muḥarram observances created administrative problems in several areas in the former British Empire, such as the infamous Hosay Riot in 1884; see Kelvin Singh, *Bloodstained Tombs: The Muharram Massacre of 1884* (Port of Spain, Trinidad, 1988). Closer to our area of focus, the approach of Muḥarram caused great anxiety for colonial officials in Singapore throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; see, for example, Charles Burton Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore* (Kuala Lumpur, 1965). Even in Bengkulu, disturbances were not altogether unknown, as can be gleaned from stories of the rather rowdy *beruji dol* of bygone days, which are still remembered by older members of the community.
37. At the same time, however, devotional aspects of the *tabot* tradition are maintained and further developed by some smaller segments of the community. The relation between these different scales of ritual economy in contemporary *tabot* tradition will be further discussed below.
38. '*Perayaan Tabot bukanlah ibadah tetapi semata-mata merupakan upaya untuk melestarikan dan mengembangkan budaya daerah. Jangan mencampur-adukkan Tabot dengan agama*'; see 'Tabot Bukan Upacara Keagamaan', op. cit.
39. Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York, 1992), pp. 122–3.
40. Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in its Practice, Essays on its Theory* (Columbia, 1990), p. 8.
41. Bell, *Ritual Theory*, p. 186.
42. Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett and Bennett Simon, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (New York, 2008), p. 31.
43. Ibid., p. 4.
44. Ibid., p. 7.
45. Ibid., p. 103.
46. For more on the role that expressions of devotion to ʿAlid martyrs and saints played in the

politics of Fatimid Cairo, see Caroline Williams, 'The Cult of 'Alid Saints in the Fatimid Monuments of Cairo, Part I: The Mosque of al-Aqmar', *Muqarnas*, 1 (1983), pp. 37–52; and Caroline Williams, 'The Cult of 'Alid Saints in the Fatimid Monuments of Cairo, Part II: The Mausolea', *Muqarnas*, 3 (1985), pp. 39–60.

47. Paula Sanders, *Ritual, Politics and the City in Fatimid Cairo* (Albany, NY, 1994), p. 135.
48. Irene A. Bierman, *Writing Signs: The Fatimid Public Text* (Berkeley, CA, 1998), p. 15.
49. Ibid., p. 61.
50. Ibid., p. 130.
51. Harapandi Dahri, *Tabot: Jejak Cinta Keluarga Nabi di Bengkulu* (Jakarta, 2009), pp. 54, 153.
52. See, for example, Baried Baroroh, 'Le Shi'isme en Indonesie', *Archipel*, 15 (1978), pp. 65–84. There are, of course, political and historiographic issues involved in these debates, which arise out of Islamic reformist and Indonesian nationalist reactions to perceived Dutch orientalist attempts to compromise the 'pure' and 'orthodox' Arabic nature of Indonesian Islam. Classic statements of this position can be found in papers of the Medan conference on the Islamization of Indonesia, published as M. Dahlan Mansoer, HAMKA, Aboe Bakar Atjeh and Muhammad Said, ed., *Sejarah Masuknya Islam ke Indoensia* (Medan, 1963).
53. For an inventory and discussion of such material from northern Aceh, see Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, *Les Monuments Funéraires et l'Histoire du Sultanat de Pasai à Sumatra, XIII^e–XVI^e siècles* (Paris, 2008).
54. Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements? 'Alī and Fatima in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 93–111.
55. Wieringa, 'Shi'itic Elements', p. 107.
56. These materials are discussed in Wendy Mukherjee and Faried F. Saenong's contributions to this volume.

12. BURLESQUING MUḤARRAM PROCESSIONS INTO CARNIVALESQUE *BORIA*

1. This chapter is a revision of 'Woe from Wit: Burlesquing Muharram Processions into Carnivalesque Boria' in Jelani Harun and Ben Murtagh, eds., *Mengharungi Laut Sastera Melayu. Kumpulan Esei Penghargaan Profesor V. I. Braginsky* (Crossing the Sea of Malay Literature: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Professor V. I. Braginsky) (Kuala Lumpur, 2010), pp. 533–61. I am grateful for the editors' permission to republish it.
2. For another case of local developments of South Asian Muḥarram traditions in a Southeast Asian Muslim context, see Michael Feener's contribution to this volume.
3. Samuel Kinser, *Rabelais's Carnival: Text, Context, Metatext* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), p. 47.
4. Brabants Dagblad, 23 January 2008, www.brabantsdagblad.nl/regios/brabant// article2516166.ece. The title of the article, 'Parades cause too much stress', is an indication of excesses that occurred.
5. Michael D. Bristol, *Carnival and Theater: Plebeian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (New York, 1989), pp. 27–8.
6. Samuel Kinser, *Carnival American Style: Mardi Gras at New Orleans and Mobile* (Chicago, IL, 1990), p. xv.
7. Foucault quoted from Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York, 1996), p. 25.

8. Ibid., pp. 2–6.
9. Frank J. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad: Muharram Performances in an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora* (Philadelphia, PA, 2003), pp. 57–8. Of course, this does not mean that the observances in regions with a Shi'a majority were not of 'mixed descent' and did not change or were at any time uncontested (see ibid., pp. 32–52). Also, the general tendency that Shi'a people are familiar with the religious meaning of the passion plays and religious symbols does not exclude comical incidents or sexual license being alluded to on or offstage in Iran (see William O. Beeman, 'A Full Arena: The Development and Meaning of Popular Performance Traditions in Iran', in Michael E. Bonine and Nikki R. Keddie, eds., *Continuity and Change in Modern Iran* (Albany, NY, 1982), pp. 285–305; and Michael M. J. Fischer and Mahdi Abedi, *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition* (Madison, 1990), pp. 14–15.
10. Jim Masselos, 'Change and Custom in the Format of the Bombay Mohurrum during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 5 (1982), pp. 47–67.
11. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad*, pp. 93–5.
12. Prabu P. Mohapatra, 'The Hosay Massacre of 1884: Class and Community among Indian Immigrant Labourers in Trinidad', in Arvind Das and Marcel van der Linden, eds., *Work and Social Change in Asia: Essays in Honour of Jan Breman* (New Delhi, 2003), pp. 187–230.
13. David Pinault, *Horse of Karbala: Muslim Devotional Life in India* (New York, 2001), pp. 87–108.
14. Feener, R. Michael, *'Tabut*: Muharram Observances in the History of Bengkulu', *Studia Islamica*, 2 (1999), pp. 87–130; and Margaret J. Kartomi, 'Tabut—A Shi'a Ritual Transplanted from India to Sumatra', in David P. Chandler and M. C. Ricklefs, eds., *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Indonesia: Essays in Honour of J. D. Legge* (Clayton, Vic., 1986), pp. 141–62.
15. J. D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Malays of Pinang and Province Wellesley', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, NS, 2 (1857), p. 116.
16. Ibid., pp. 137–8.
17. Ibid., pp. 138–9. Jawi Peranakan usually refers to groups of locally-born Muslims of South Asian fathers and Malay mothers. Vaughan is extremely negative about this community and uses several other designations for them, such as *Jawi-bukan* ('non-Malays'), *Jawi-pekan* ('urban Malays') and *Jadi-bukan* ('not-made'). Although *Jawi pekan* is quite well known, the other terms may better reflect Vaughan's partiality and hearing deficiency rather than the actual situation.
18. Mervyn Llewelyn Wynne, *Triad and Tabut: A Survey of the Origin and Diffusion of Chinese and Mohamedan Secret Societies in the Malay Peninsula A.D. 1800–1935* (London–New York, 2000), pp. 167–71.
19. Mahani Musa, *Malay Secret Societies in the Northern Malay States, 1821–1940s* (Kuala Lumpur, 2007), p. 65.
20. Ibid., pp. 87–110.
21. Helen Fujimoto, *The South Indian Muslim Community and the Evolution of the Jawi Peranakan in Penang up to 1948* (Tokyo, 1988), p. 174.
22. Jan van der Putten, 'Wayang Parsi, Bangsawan and Printing: Commercial Cultural Expressions in the Malay World', in R. Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea, eds., *Islamic Connections. Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 2009), pp. 86–108.

23. Matthew Isaac Cohen, 'On the Origin of the Komedie Stamboel: Popular Culture, Colonial Society, and the Parsi Theatre Movement', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 157 (2001), p. 314.
24. A. W. Hamilton, 'The Boria', *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 82 (1920), p. 139.
25. *Chahyah Pulau Pinang* (3 March 1906), p. 4.
26. 'Notes from Penang. The Borea', *The Straits Times* (28 February 1907), p. 7.
27. Cf. Vaughan's description quoted above. These sketches seem to have become the most prominent part of *boria* in the 1920s and 1930s, when scenes from legends and films were re-enacted. Sketches also form the centre of present-day performances of *boria*; see Rahmah Bujang, *Boria: A Form of Malay Theatre* (Singapore, 1987).
28. Hamilton, 'The Boria', pp. 139–44.
29. Ibid., p. 141.
30. *Pinang Gazette and Straits Chronicle* (PGSC) (10 June 1897), p. 2. Unfortunately, the report does not state what scandalous dress the boys had donned, which would have given us some valuable information about the form. For similar reports see *PGSC*, 3 June 1897, p. 2, regarding Muslims who had requested a permit; *PGSC*, 20 May 1899, p. 2, concerning someone who was fined for beating the drum; *PGSC*, 25 May 1899, p. 2, reporting that people had been fined for performing *boria* in certain areas without a license.
31. 'The Borea Season. What Happened in Days Gone by', *The Straits Echo* (4 September 1922), p. 4.
32. It is a well-known tradition in the Malay world to give children something at the feast at the end of the fasting month, Idul fitri. The connection between religious celebrations and monetary gifts is, at present, not uncommon, although most probably 'frowned upon' by conservative, especially reformist, Muslims. In 1930 Abdul Rahim Kajai, the editor of *Saudara* at that moment, criticised and ridiculed the Islamic tradional authorities who organised a practice that was called *boria* transformed into *marhaban*, referring to groups of youngsters going around people's houses to recite prayers and blessings just after the Idul fitri prayers in the mosque and 'coercing' the hosts to give some money. Kajai reacted to a letter to the editor by a very perturbed Muslim who could not agree with the practice (*Saudara*, 26 April 1930). Apparently, the practice is still performed every year after Idul fitri by adult males and females as well as groups of youngsters; see 'Spreading Raya Cheer via Marhaban Visits', *Star Online* (7 October 2009). Another boundary-crossing venture of *boria* used for other types of ritual was mentioned by Hamilton for Singapore and Malacca, where *boria* was used in connection with the *Mandi Safar* rituals, while a newspaper report gives details about a *boria* troupe going around Chinese houses in Klang to liven up the Chinese New Year celebrations—a great success, albeit regretfully the band could sing no Chinese, only Malay songs; 'Notes from Klang', *The Straits Times* (4 March 1910), p. 8.
33. ... *anak Melayu bermain Afrika bermuka hitam dan Afrika bermuka merah*, in *Jawi Peranakan* (17 August 1891), p. 2.
34. Quoted in [Sheppard, Mubin], 'The Penang Boria: A Fragment of Malayan History Assembled by the Hon. Editor', *Malaya in History*, 10 (1965), p. 40.
35. 'Bos dan Negro', *Idaran Zaman* (13 August 1925), p. 8.
36. See advertisements in *The Straits Times* (September 1924).
37. Ariff notes that these 'tropical songsters', who apparently provided the extravagance of *boria* with their dresses and hairstyles, were unfortunately in decline during the 1930s.

38. 'The Penang *Boria*', *The Straits Times* (14 July 1937), p. 10.
39. 'Penang's Malay Procession', *The Straits Times* (1 May 1937), p. 17.
40. 'The Penang *Boria*', *The Straits Times* (14 July 1937), p. 10.
41. See 'Boria Perfomances for War Charity', *The Straits Times* (20 February 1940), p. 12; and 'New State hailed by UMNO to celebrate the birth of the Federation of Malaya' (3 January 1948), p. 8.
42. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad*, p. 58.
43. Th. W. Juynboll, *Handleiding tot de kennis van de Mohammedaansche Wet volgens de leer der Sjafi'itische school* (Leiden, 1930), pp. 95–7, 113–14.
44. Cf. 'Selamat Hari Raya', *Majalah Guru* (March 1930), p. 42.
45. *Bumi Putra* (25 April 1934), p. 3.
46. Alijah Gordon, ed., *The Real Cry of Syed Shaykh al-Hady* (Kuala Lumpur, 1999), p. 283. See also Muhammad Yusuf 's strong defence of Muhammad Ali's English translation of the Qur'an in *Saudara* (28 February 1931). For his membership of Anjuman-i-Islam, see Khoo Kay Kim, 'Malay Attitudes towards Indians', in K.S. Sandhu and A. Mani, eds., *Indian Communities in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 1993), p. 269.
47. Za'ba, 'Recent Malay Literature', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 19 (1941), p. 2. See also Abdul Rahman Haji Abdullah, *Pemikiran Islam di Malaysia: Sejarah dan Aliran* (Jakarta, 1997), p. 139, referring to the title as *Risalah Ahmadiyya yang kedua: Siapa Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, which was published by the Indian Islamic Mission in Patani.
48. Fujimoto, *The South Indian Muslim Community*, p. 177.
49. 'The Boria in the North. Modernised Bands in Penang and Perak', *The Straits Times* (28 January 1935), p. 10.
50. Muhammad Yusuf bin Sultan Maidin, *Boria dan Bencananya* (Pulau Pinang, 1922), *Pengenalan*.
51. Muhammad Yusuf, *Boria dan Bencananya*, pp. 13–19: *Ada pula setengahnya memakai pakaian perempuan dan menari seperti ronggeng dan berjalan sepanjang jalan raya dengan bergelombang dan berkain batik dan berkebaya renda dan bergelang berantai dan berkerosang. Subhana Allah. [...]dan ada pula yang memakai pakaian perempuan nasrani dengan bergaun bersubang dan dipasangnya rambut [p. 14] gadung dan disumbatnya kain atau kapas betul dengan dadanya supaya nampak seperti dada perempuan. Amboi, berjalan pun terlenggok dang terlenggang dan menari berpeluk dan berpusing di tengah halaman membencikan hati orang yang memandang seperti kaum (Gypsy) yaitu kaum yang liar di Eropah. [...]Adapula permainan yang sangat aib dan menjatuhkan marwah itu ialah pasukan bujang (yakni perempuan sundal) maka orang yang bermain itu semuanya berkebaya renda berkain batik bergelang berkerosang berantai dan bergelombang dan bunyiannya ialah gong biola dan rebana dan tarinya itu seperti perempuan ronggeng. Subhana Allah. Cubalah pikir ayuhai saudaraku barangkali orang yang bermain itu ada berbini atau beranak perempuan atau ada baginya adik atau kakak atau ada baginya menantu perempuan maka apabila ia menghiaskan dirinya dan menari seperti perempuan di tengah [p. 15] halaman di hadapan orang2 daripada serba bangsa dan anak istrinya ada bersama2 melihat di situ, tiadakah iaitu menjatuhkan marwah dan menghilangkan hormatnya [...] dan apa kala dilihat oleh perempuan akan suaminya itu menari dan menjerit seperti orang gila di tengah halaman itu tentulah hilang hormat dan takutnya kepada suaminya; dan apakala segala bapa itu menjatuhkan dirinya ke dalam kehinaan di hadapan anaknya bolehkah anak2nya itu menghormatkan akan dia lagi? Hai seka-*

lian saudaraku inilah ibu segala kejahatan dan inilah permainan yang telah merusakkan kaum Melayu dan yang telah menahankan kemajuan bangsa Melayu itu, adakah patut dijalankan dia lagi? [p. 19]

52. Muhammad Yusuf bin Sultan Maidin, *Syair Boria. (Hal-ihwal yang telah berlaku di dalam Muharram 1341)* (Pulau Penang, 1922). This poem was published after his pamphlet in prose; the library slip in the British Library copy on the inside cover mentions the date of 9 November 1922. I am grateful to Annabel Gallop who very kindly sent me copies of the two publications.
53. Muhammad Yusuf, *Syair Boria*, p. 5. The original reads: *ahli boria naiklah berang/seperti orang hendak berperang/orang penakut menunjuk garang/di lepas yang lain aku diserang// ahli penasihat menjadi heran/apabila mereka menengar khabaran/nasihatnya jatuh berceceran/ bendera maksiat nampak berkibaran*.
54. Muhammad Yusuf, *Syair Boria*, p. 8. The original reads: *sebab kaya hendak bersuka/orang miskin mendapat luka*.
55. Anoma Pieris, 'Doubtful Associations: Reviewing Penang through the 1867 Riots' (Unpublished, 2002), p. 3.

13. A *TA'ZIYA* FROM TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY MALAYSIA: FAISAL TEHRANI'S PASSION PLAY *KARBALA*

1. Faisal Tehrani, *Drama pentas sebuah ta'ziyah Karbala* (Putrajaya, 2008).
2. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faisal_Tehrani. The garbled sentences are adapted (without identifying the source) from S. Bissme, 'Writing for Change (Faisal Tehrani)' (3 August 2008), which can be found *inter alia* on http://booknature.blogspot.com/2008/08/writing-for-change-faisal-tehrani.html (accessed 11 June 2010).
3. See the informative article by Monique Zaini-Lajoubert, 'The World beyond Malaysia (mainly the West) in Malaysian Literary Works Published from the 1990s', in Vladimir Braginsky and Ben Murtagh, eds., *The Portrayal of Foreigners in Indonesian and Malay Literatures. Essays of the Ethnic 'Other'* (Lewiston–Queenston–Lampeter, 2007), pp. 289–314.
4. See http://tehranifaisal.blogspot.com/. The interview appeared in S. Bissme, 'Writing for change (Faisal Tehrani)'. The original text is in English. Unless noted otherwise, citations from Malaysian sources in this essay are in Malay, and all translations are mine.
5. Faisal Tehrani, *1515* (Kuala Lumpur, 2003).
6. As students of literary criticism may know, this theme echoes the title of a seminal scholarly book by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (New York, 1989), alluding to a phrase by Salman Rushdie ('the Empire writes back to the Centre').
7. David Cook, *Martyrdom in Islam* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 58.
8. See the 4th and latest edition of *Kamus Dewan* (Kuala Lumpur, 2005), p. 1579. The same applies to other comprehensive dictionaries; see e.g. Daud Baharum, ed., *Kamus Prima* (Petaling Jaya, 2005), p. 682; Arbak Othman, ed., *Kamus komprehensif bahasa Melayu* (Shah Alam, 2006), p. 753; and C. M. Kelana and Lai Choy, eds., *Kamus Daya* (Seri Kembangan, 2008), p. 1662.
9. See the 2002 online article by Willian O. Beeman, 'Ta'ziyeh Performance Conventions: A Short Sketch', http://www.asiasociety.org/arts-culture/performing-arts/theater/taziyeh-performance-conventions-a-short-sketch.

10. The original text can be found *inter alia* on Faisal Tehrani's website (http://tehranifaisal.blogspot.com), and reads: '*Karbala—sebuah sejarah yang ditutup propaganda penguasa. Semoga terpandang di sisi pemimpin syurga*.'
11. Faisal Tehrani is its star author: this publisher's homepage proudly features four works by him, including *Karbala*; see http://www.abw.com.my/
12. See the news coverage in 'Selepas berdepan halangan, Faisal Tehrani berjaya pentaskan Kopitiam Ghadir', on *Harakahdaily.net* (14 August 2009): http://harakahdaily.net/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=22125andItemid=1; and 'Temubual eksklusif: Panasnya, kontroversinya Kopitiam Ghadir', on *KLpos.com* (25 August 2009): http://www.klpos.com/news/2009/08/25/1.html
13. See the report 'Kopitiam Ghadir: A Play that is Larger than Life' (20 August 2010), which can be found at: http://singaleo.blogspot.com/2009/08/kopitiam-gadhir-play-that-is-larger.html; and also at: http://revolusi-pembudayaan-selawat.blogspot.com/2009/09/kopitiam-ghadir-play-that-is-larger.html
14. Faisal Tehrani does not mention this 'immoral' play by name, but the reference is to *Naturalisasi* (Naturalisation) by Nam Ron and Fared Ayam; see the report 'Dua cerita dari 3 zaman berbeza dalam 'Teater Kompilasi Vol. 2' at http://mstar.com.my/hiburan/cerita.asp?file=/2009/8/6/mstar_hiburan/20090805112843andsec=mstar_hiburan
15. See a report on the play in 'Faisal Tehrani muncul lagi dengan *Kopitiam Ghadir*' (24 July 2009), at: http://www.klpos.com/news/2009/07/24/1.html. *Ustaz* means '(male) religious teacher', and *tok* is an honorific title. I would like to thank the author for kindly providing me with a copy of his script.
16. Intriguingly, in traditional Malay literature we can still find an echo of Sunnī–Shi'a rivalry in stories on the wisdom of 'Alī in juxtaposition to the stupidity of 'Umar; see Edwin Wieringa, 'Does Traditional Islamic Malay Literature Contain Shi'itic Elements? 'Alī and Fātimah in Malay Hikayat Literature', *Studia Islamika*, 3 (1996), pp. 104–5.
17. See 'Faisal Tehrani muncul lagi'. My rendering of the abbreviation of the *taṣliya* formula *saw* into the abbreviation PBUH (Peace be upon Him) is in accordance with common usage among English-speaking Muslims, though this interpretation is in fact not entirely accurate.
18. See also 'Selepas berdepan halangan'.
19. David Waines, *An Introduction to Islam* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 153. Tahera Qutbuddin, *Al-Mu'ayyad al-Shīrazī and Fatimid Da'wa Poetry: A Case of Commitment in Classical Arabic Literature* (Leiden–Boston, 2005), p. 140 proposes another translation, which perhaps better reflects the Shi'ī perspective: 'Whosoever's master (*mawlā*) I am, this 'Alī is his master. O Lord, aid those who aid him, forsake those who forsake him, and make Truth turn with him wheresoever he turns.' On this invocation that Muḥammad was reported to have made for 'Alī at Ghadīr Khum, see also Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 253. See furthermore I. K. Poonawala, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 1, p. 842.
20. For succinct overviews with further references, see L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Ghadīr Khumm', in *EI2*, vol. 2, pp. 993–4; and Maria Dakake, 'Gadīr Komm', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 10, pp. 246–7.
21. Cf. Johan ter Haar, *Volgelingen van de imam. Een kennismaking met de sji'itische Islam* (Amsterdam, 1995), p. 24. The translation of Q 5:3 is taken from Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London, 1964), p. 100.
22. Waines, *An Introduction*, 156.

23. See 'Temubual ekslusif'.
24. On the Muslim hermeneutical problem of understanding the Prophet's intentions, see Robert Gleave, 'Personal Piety', in Jonathan E. Brockopp, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Muḥammad* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 108–17.
25. On Karbalā' as *un mythe fondateur du chiisme*, see Sabrina Mervin, 'Le théâtre chiite au Liban, entre ritual et spectacle', in Nicolas Puig and Franck Mermier, eds., *Itinéraires esthétiques et scènes culturelles au Prox-Orient* (Beirut, 2007), p. 2 (pagination according to the internet version, see http://ifpo.revues.org/546).
26. Vernon James Schubel, *Religious Performance in Contemporary Islam: Shiʿi Devotional Rituals in South Asia* (Columbia, 1993), p. 71.
27. Interview with Faisal Tehrani (March 2007); see Tehrani, *Karbala*, pp. 126–7.
28. Ibid., p. 114.
29. Ibid., p. 127.
30. Cf. David Pinault, *Horse of Karbala: Muslim Devotional Life in India* (New York–Basingstoke, 2001), p. 214.
31. See Pinault, *Horse*, p. 220; Saskia Gieling, *Religion and War in Revolutionary Iran* (London–New York, 1999), pp. 86–7.
32. Gieling, *Religion*, p. 142.
33. Ibid., p. 86.
34. Hamid Dabashi, 'Ta'ziyeh as Theatre of Protest', *Drama Review*, 49 (2005), p. 91; Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New York–London, 1993); and Hamid Dabashi, *Islamic Liberation Theology: Resisting the Empire* (London–New York, 2008). The idea of 'liberation theology' in relation to modern-day Shiʿī thinkers is not new: the Anglican priest and scholar Kenneth Cragg (not quoted by Dabashi) already drew attention to this in his intellectual portrait of the Iranian intellectual ʿAlī Shariʿatī (1933–77); see Kenneth Cragg, *The Pen and the Faith: Eight Modern Muslim Writers and the Qur'an* (London–Boston–Sydney, 1985), pp. 73–5, 100.
35. Dabashi, 'Ta'ziyeh', p. 93; Dabashi, *Islamic Liberation Theology*, p. 187.
36. Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 302. For this technical term of Shiʿī, and especially Twelver Islam, see B. Scarcia Amoretti, 'Maḏlūm', in *EI2*, vol. 6, pp. 958–9.
37. Cf. Mervin, 'Le théâtre chiite', p. 4, who writes 'le martyre de Husayn, c'est le paradigme du sacrifice de soi, de la lutte entre le bien et le mal, du combat contre l'oppression et l'injustice'. See also Mary-Jo Delvecchio Good and Bryan J. Good, 'Ritual, the State, and the Transformation of Emotional Discourse in Iranian Society', *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 12 (1988), p. 50: 'Mourning for the martyrdom of Hossein is interpreted as grief for oppression and social injustice, and as the basis for rededication to the establishment of the just society even in the face of martyrdom.'
38. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 120.
39. Ibid., p. 120.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., p. 121.
42. Ibid., p. 112.
43. Ibid., pp. 113, 121–2.
44. Ibid., pp. 116, 120.
45. Ibid., p. 123.
46. Ibid., p. 124.

47. Ibid., p. 123.
48. On the 'culture' versus 'religion' problematic in public discourse in neighbouring Indonesia, see Julian Millie, *Splashed by the Saint: Ritual Reading and Islamic Sanctity in West Java* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 142, 145.
49. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 124.
50. Ibid., p. 125. On Taha Husayn (1889–1973), also known as the 'Dean of Arabic literature', see the entries on him by P. Cachia in *EI2*, vol. 10, pp. 95–6; and in Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey, eds., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (London–New York, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 296–7.
51. See Niluksi Koswanage, 'Q+A: Does Malaysia Caning Herald a More Islamic State?' (24 August 2009), at: http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKLR53275120090824
52. Cf. the official statement on the JAKIM website: '*Dalam menjalankan fungsi penyelidikan akidah, JAKIM melaksanakan berkonsepkan prinsip-prinsip akidah Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah yang menjadi dasar dan pegangan Negara Malaysia. Akidah yang selain daripada Ahli Sunnah Wal Jamaah adalah ditolak*.' See http://www.islam.gov.my/ppi/profil.html
53. See, for example, Mir Jabir Ali, '4 Shia followers arrested under ISA purely on the grounds of their faith', posted on 21 November 2009 on the website Husaini Youths (with the motto 'Striving for Justice'): http://www.husainiyouths.com/profiles/blogs/4-shia-followers-arrested
54. Nicole Fritz and Martin Flaherty, *Unjust Order: Malaysia's Internal Security Act* (New York, 2003), p. xi. Fritz and Flaherty, *Unjust order*, 8 note that 'many of the groups deemed undesirable are *Shi'ite* Muslims'.
55. See 'Penjelasan terhadap fahaman Syiah': http://www.islam.gov.my/e-rujukan/syiah.html#seleweng
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. The original sentence is rather oddly phrased and reads: '*Negara-negara yang mempunyai penganut Syiah, telah menimbulkan ketidakstabilan rakyat dan pentadbiran di negara tersebut*.' Incidentally, a similar line of argumentation is used in anti-Islamic discourse in France, in which it is suggested that an ethnic Islam (Arab, Middle Eastern) would import the conflicts of the Middle East into France; see Olivier Roy, *Secularism Confronts Islam* (New York, 2007), p. 30.
59. See, for example: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dunia-politik/message/5962 (November, 2006); Zukri Aksah, 'Saasatul Ibaad: Faisal Tehrani mengaku Syiah' at: http://zukriaksah.com/utama/?p=221 (accessed 11 December 2008).
60. This comment by someone who calls himself 'taker', posted on 7 August 2009, reads: '*Perlu diingat, jika orang murtad, kita kena kuarantin dia dulu (ISA) sebelum dihukum bunuh. Orang macam Faisal Tehrani ni memang patut ke (ISA)*.' This and other reactions can be found on: http://pinkturtle2.wordpress.com/2008/12/11/11423/
61. See Jimadi Shah Othman, 2008, 'Dr Asri tuduh Faisal 'berbohong' at: http://www1.malaysiakini.com/news/83792 (accessed 2 June 2008). Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin held the office of mufti of Perlis from November 2006 to November 2008.
62. Faisal Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. viii writes that each act can be played independently: '*Drama ta'ziyah ini dibahagi kepada tiga bab atau adegan di mana setiap satunya boleh berdiri sendiri. Ini ialah untuk membolehkan ta'ziyah ini dimainkan secara kecil-kecilan dan sesuai dengan semangatnya untuk dipentaskan di mana-mana jua tempat khususnya di lapangan terbuka.*

Namun kesan yang lebih mendalam akan dirasai jika ketiga-tiga adegan ini dapat dimainkan sebagai satu perkabugan yang panjang.'

63. The repentance of al-Ḥurr and his heroic martyrdom is a stock episode in stories about Karbalā'; see M. J. Kister, 'al-Ḥurr b. Yazīd', in *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 588; and David Pingree, 'Ḥorr-e Riāḍi', in *EIr*, vol. 12, p. 478. On the pun, cf. Syed Akbar Hyder, *Reliving Karbala: Martyrdom in South Asian Memory* (Oxford, 2006), p. 89; Pinault, *Horse*, p. 43.
64. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 89.
65. Ibid., p. vii.
66. On colour symbolism in *ta'ziya*, see Malekpour, *The Islamic Drama* (London–Portland, OR, 2004), p. 130. On the symbolism of yellow, see Ewa Machut-Mendecka, 'Ta'ziyah: Ritual in lieu of fight', p. 21 (http://www.wgsr.uw.edu.pl/pub/uploads/aps04/3Machut-Mendecka_Taziyah.pdf). On the symbolism of green and red, see P. Chelkowski, 'Ta'ziya', in *EI2*, vol. 10, p. 407.
67. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 86.
68. Ibid., p. vii.
69. Ibid., p. v.
70. Robert Leach, *Theatre Studies: The Basics* (London–New York, 2008), pp. 168–9.
71. Mervin, 'Le théâtre chiite', p. 18.
72. William O. Beeman, 'The Ta'ziyeh of Hor. The Ta'ziyeh of the Children of Moslem. The Ta'ziyeh of Imam Hussein', in *Theatre Journal*, 55 (2003), p. 361. The term 'participant mourners' is from Delvecchio Good and Good, 'Ritual', p. 49.
73. Delvecchio Good and Good, 'Ritual', p. 52.
74. Andrzej Wirth, 'Semeiological aspects of the ta'ziyeh', in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York, 1979), p. 34.
75. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. vii.
76. Reza Ale-Mohammed, 'An Iranian Passion Play: 'Taziyeh' in History and Performance', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 17 (2001), p. 58. See also Peter Chelkowski on 'actors and acting' in the lemma 'Ta'zia' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, http://www.iranica.com/articles/tazia (accessed 15 July 2009).
77. Cf. Parviz Mamnoun, 'Ta'ziyeh from the Viewpoint of Western Theatre', in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York, 1979), p. 158.
78. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 41.
79. Ibid., p. 42.
80. Ibid., p. 52.
81. Ibid., p. 54.
82. See the stage direction in ibid., p. 34: '*Kumpulan orang saleh dan orang fasik muncul semula di tengah pentas membawa kotak-kotak padu pelbagai saiz. Beberapa dari kalang mereka kekal mengibarkan panji. Kotak-kotak tersebut akan menjadi set perkhemahan tentera dan aras untuk seteipa mereka bermain supaya kadang-kala ada pelaku dapat berdiri di atasnya, atau duduk atau kotak-kotak itu disusun untuk menunjukkan kepelbagaian aksi di medan perang Karbala.*'
83. See Chelkowski, 'Ta'ziya', p. 407.
84. Tehrani, *Karbala*, pp. 54–5.
85. Ibid., p. 55.
86. Ibid., p. 27.
87. Leach, *Theatre Studies*, p. 86.

88. Ibid.
89. Pinault, *Horse*, p. 219. Pinault refers to a midday ʿĀshūra' procession in downtown Chicago in 1994, which completely puzzled ignorant spectators.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid.
92. For more information on these events, see the special issue on *taʿziya* of *Drama Review*, 49 (2005), under the guest editorship of Peter J. Chelkowski.
93. Gustav Thaiss, 'Contested Meanings and the Politics of Authenticity: The "Hosay" in Trinidad', in Akbar S. Ahmed and Hastings Donnan, eds., *Islam, Globalization and Postmodernity* (London–New York, 1994), p. 39.
94. For the Malaysian and Indonesian examples, see the contributions by Jan van der Putten and Michael Feener in this volume. For the situation in Trinidad, see Thaiss, 'Contested meanings', pp. 38–62.
95. See, for example, Mary F. Thurlkill, *Chosen Among Women: Mary and Fatima in Medieval Christianity and Shiʿite Islam* (Notre Dame, IL, 2007).
96. See Edwin Wieringa, 'Moral Education through Islamic Songs in Twentieth-century Java', in Glenda Abramson and Hilary Kilpatrick, ed., *Religious Perspectives in Modern Muslim and Jewish Literatures* (London–New York, 2006), pp. 90–111.
97. Schubel, *Religious Performance*, p. 160.
98. Tehrani, *Karbala*, pp. 3–4. Act Two has the same beginning, see ibid., pp. 31–2.
99. The agnomen Abu Abdillah literally means 'the father of Abdullah', and is a common epithet of Ḥusayn, understood as 'the utterly submissive slave of God'; see Abu Muhammad Zaynu'l 'Abidin, 'Horizons of Thought: A Brief Commentary on Ziyarat 'Ashura', http://www.darolhadith.com/pic.php?action=showzipandzid=120. There are different interpretations of this name: see e.g. 'Exegesis of the Agnomen—Abu Abdillah' on the Shiʿi website Al Muntazar, http://www.almuntazar.com/2005/02/16/exegesis-of-the-agnomen-abu-abdillah/
100. For further details on *wilāya* for the Shiʿa, see P. E. Walker, 'Wilāya', *EI2*, vol. 11, pp. 208–9.
101. It is used in its normal Malaysian meaning in Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 66.
102. On the Sunnī–Shiʿa debates of intercession, see David Pinault, 'Shia Lamentation Rituals and Reinterpretations of the Doctrine of Intercession', *History of Religions*, 38 (1999), pp. 285–305; and Pinault, *Horse*, pp. 157–80.
103. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 4.
104. Ibid., p. 5.
105. Ibid., p. 109. The question is: '*Hai, umat macam apa kalian*?!'
106. Ibid., p. 20.
107. Ibid., p. 22. The light imagery is an important part of Shiʿīlore, cf. Schubert, *Religious Performance*, pp. 18–19, 22, 32, 64, 75.
108. Ibid., p. 25.
109. Ibid., p. 92.
110. Ibid., pp. 97–8.
111. Ibid., p. 12.
112. Ibid., pp. 98–9.
113. Mamnoun, 'Ta'ziyeh', p. 159.
114. See, for example, Mamnoun, 'Ta'ziyeh', p. 163; and Reza Ale-Mohammed, 'An Iranian Passion Play', p. 56.

115. Mamnoun, 'Ta'ziyeh', p. 163.
116. William L. Hanaway, Jr., 'Stereotyped Imagery in the Ta'ziyeh', in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York, 1979), pp. 187–8.
117. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 26.
118. Ibid., p. 45.
119. Ibid., p. 47.
120. Ibid.
121. Ibid., p. 75.
122. Ibid., p. 76.
123. Ibid., p. 99. On alcohol as signifier of the Other in Malay literature, see Edwin Wieringa, 'Zo dronken als een Hollander: Drank als schibbolet van een andere wereld in de traditionele en moderne Maleise literatur', in Remke Kruk and Sjef Houppermans, eds., *Een vis in een fles raki: Literatuur en drank in verschillende culturen* (Amsterdam, 2005), pp. 93–113.
124. See John Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image: Themes in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Macon, 1999); and John Renard, *Friends of God: Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment, and Servanthood* (Berkeley, LA–London, 2008).
125. Michael Gilsenan, 'Out of the Hadhramaut', *London Review of Books*, 25 (2003), pp. 7–11. In this connection one could also point to the comments on the uncouth behaviour of Arabs, which are a staple in critical accounts of the *ḥajj* from maritime Southeast Asia.
126. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 7.
127. Ibid., p. 91.
128. This is yet another reference to Shi'ī light imagery, cf. Schubert, *Religious Performance*, pp. 18–19, 22, 32, 64, 75.
129. *Al-Kawthar* or 'Abundance' is the name of a pool or river in Paradise.
130. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 36.
131. Ibid. As the Umayyad governor of Basra, Kufa and the East, Ubaidillah bin Ziyad or 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād was a deputy of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya.
132. Ibid.
133. Ibid.
134. Ibid., p. 68.
135. Ibid., p. 69.
136. Ibid.
137. Ibid., p. 70.
138. Ibid., p. 72.
139. I am indebted to V. S. Naipaul, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples* (London, 1998), p. 214 for this felicitous phrase, but my understanding of 'blood' is intended to be broader here (not only 'bloodshed', but also 'bloodline').
140. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 26. I have translated *derhaka* as 'godless'. In Malay culture this term denotes the most heinous crime; see E. Ulrich Kratz, 'Durhaka: The Concept of Treason in the Malay Hikayat Hang Tuah', *Southeast Asia Research*, 1 (1993), pp. 68–97.
141. Tehrani, *Karbala*, pp. 103–4.
142. Ibid., p. 104.
143. Ali J. Hussain, 'The Mourning of History and the History of Mourning: The Evolution of Ritual Commemoration of the Battle of Karbala', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 25 (2005), p. 80. The speech is in Tehrani, *Karbala*, pp. 107–9.
144. Syed Akbar Hyder, 'Sayyedeh Zaynab: The Conqueror of Damascus and Beyond', in Kam-

ran Scot Aghaie, ed., *The Women of Karbala: Ritual Performance and Symbolic Discourses in Modern Shiʿi Islam* (Austin, TX, 2005), p. 163. For a discussion on recent academic interpretations of Zaynab, see Karen G. Ruffle, 'Review Essay: "Discovering" the Gendered Dimensions of Shiʿism: Recent Scholarship on Gender in Shiʿi Ritual', *Contemporary Islam*, 3 (2009), pp. 167–76.

145. Hyder, 'Sayyedeh Zaynab', p. 163.
146. Tehrani, *Karbala*, p. 107.
147. Ibid., p. 109. The question is: '*Hai, umat macam apa kalian*?!'
148. S. Bissme, 'Writing for Change (Faisal Tehrani)'. The original text is in English.
149. Faisal Tehrani, *1511H [Kombat]* (Kuala Lumpur, 2004). For this book he earned the 2003 *Hadiah Sastera Kumpulan Utusan*. Cf. Faisal Tehrani's remark in S. Bissme, 'Writing': 'Why am I depicted as a West basher? There are other writers who did the same thing. Just because I wrote one novel where Muslims took over the White House, people are calling me names, but my book fulfilled the fantasy of many young readers. It became one of my most celebrated novels from which I am still earning royalty.'

14. ASPECTS OF SHIʿISM IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA: A QUEST FOR SOCIAL RECOGNITION IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA (1998–2008)

1. In this chapter, the term of Shiʿism indicates denomination in contrast with Sunnism, while Shiʿī refers to a follower or devotee in singular form, with its plural form being Shiʿīs. The term Shiʿī is used both as an adjective and a noun.
2. Researchers and historians like Abu Bakar Atjeh and A. Hasymi, who conducted studies of Shiʿism during the early period of the introduction of Islam to Indonesia, suggested that the spread of Shiʿism in the archipelago could be traced back to the fifteenth century. See Abu Bakar Atjeh, *Sekitar Masuknya Islam ke Indonesia* (Semarang, 1971), p. 59; and A. Hasymi, *Syiah dan Ahli Sunnah Saling Rebut Pengaruh dan Kekuasaan Sejak Awal Sejarah Islam di Kepulauan Nusantara* (Surabaya, 1983).
3. Dr Jalaluddin Rakhmat questions whether the Zaydiyya and Ismailiyya ever existed in Indonesia, and did have strong evidence for that, but he did not elaborate further on it. See 'Dikotomi Sunni-Syiah Tidak Relevan Lagi', in A. Rahman Zainuddin and Hamdan Basyar, eds., *Syi'ah dan Politik di Indonesia: Sebuah Penelitian* (Bandung, 2000), p. 145.
4. Puslitbang Departemen Agama, *Mazhab Syiah: Laporan Studi Tentang Kasus Keagamaan* (Jakarta, 1987), 79 leaves.
5. By using the term *Ahlul Bayt*, thus directly referring to the Household of the Prophet for their denomination, the Shiʿa in Indonesia seem to try to hush any possible accusation that their *madhhab* does not belong to Islam. In short, they are avoiding in the first place any possible accusation of heresy.
6. John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (New York, 1992), p. 16
7. Rifki Rosyad, *A Quest for True Islam: A Study of the Islamic Resurgence Movement among the Youth in Bandung, Indonesia* (Canberra, 1995), p. 4.
8. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, p 16.
9. R. Fred von der Mehden, 'Malaysian Indonesian Islamic Movements and the Iranian Connection', in John L. Esposito, ed., *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impacts* (Miami, FL, 1990), pp. 223–47.

10. J. J. Fox, 'Currents in Contemporary Islam in Indonesia', a paper originally presented at the annual Asia Vision 21 conference and research forum in 2004 at Cambridge, Massachusetts.
11. Azyumardi Azra, Asia Foundation and International Center for Islam and Pluralism, *Indonesia, Islam and Democracy: Dynamics in a Global Context* (Jakarta, 2006), p. 186.
12. Martin van Bruinessen, 'Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia', *South East Asia Research*, 10 (2002), pp. 117–54.
13. R. Michael Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 120.
14. Idi Subandy Ibrahim and Malik Dedy Djamaluddin, *Zaman Baru Islam Indonesia, Pemikiran Dan Aksi Politik Abdurrahman Wahid, M Amien Rais, Nurcholish Madjid Jalaluddin Rakhma* (Bandung, 1998), p. 31.
15. The development of Islamic movements during this period has been intensively discussed by Feener; see Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought*, pp. 118–20.
16. For more on Rakhmat's role in the development of Shi'ism in modern Indonesia, see R. Michael Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 121–30.
17. These high schools are well-known as senior high schools plus. The attribute 'plus' is used because its programmes combine a number of subjects from the national curriculum with Islamic teachings and a focus on fostering moral conduct. See *SMA Plus Muthahhari*, available online at: http://www.smuth.net/ (accessed 26 May 2010).
18. Agus Abubakar Arsal al-Habsyi was born in Makassar, South Sulawesi on 6 August 1960, to a Ḥaḍramī migrant family. He was a Shi'ī student well-known in the early 1980s, and was active at the Arif Rahman Hakim Mosque of the UI. He was a student at the Physics Department. His intensive learning of Shi'ī teachings took place at the university. He was also familiar with Shi'ism, as it was known before the Iranian revolution, due to the existence of some Shi'īs in a village in South Sulawesi, who also acted as factors in his conversion. See Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia* (Leiden, 2009).
19. The word *hawza* comes from *hawz*, an Arabic word that literally means 'the territory of learning'. This Arabic expression defines scholars as a body of religious professionals whose main task is to teach and learn. See Laurence Louer, *The Transnational Shia Politics, Religious and Political Networks in the Gulf* (New York, 2008), pp. 73–7.
20. Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is*, p. 28.
21. Ibid., p. 29; and see also Syamsuri Ali, *Alumni Hawza Ilmiyah Qum, Pewacanaan Intelektualitas dan Relasi Sosialnya Dalam Transmisi Syiah di Indonesia* (Indonesia, 2002), pp. 154–5.
22. 'Ustadz Husein Bin Abu Bakar Alhabsyi Yang Pejuang', *Republika* daily newspaper (3 October 2008), available online at: http://www.republika.co.id/berita/6668/ustadz_husein_bin_abu_bakar_alhabsji_ustadz_yang_pejuang (accessed 29 October 2009).
23. Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is*, p. 28.
24. Ali, *Alumni Hawza*, p. 186.
25. Ibid, p. 187.
26. Ibid., pp. 271–2.
27. According to Zulkifli, Shi'ī *ustadh* have two general characteristics worthy of note. First, their education usually takes place at institutions of Islamic learning, where various branches of Islamic knowledge are taught. This means that they are considered to have gained a basic level of Islamic knowledge. Several Shi'ī *ustadh* in Indonesia studied at *pesantren*s, and then went on to pursue their studies at institutions of Islamic learning in the Middle East, namely

at *hawza ʿilmiyya* in Qum. A small number of Shiʿī *ustadh* (the most prominent of them) pursued their learning at other tertiary institutions in Indonesia or abroad. See Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiʿis*, p. 30.

28. During an interview with the writer in late July 2009 in Jakarta, Hussein bin Shahab (Chairman of Baitul Muhibbin Foundation) suggested the terms Qummiyyin and non-Qummiyyin for these two groups, while Zulkifli referred to '*ustadz* and intellectuals'.
29. The Shiʿī centre of learning in Syria, among others, is Hawza Ilmiyya Zainabiyyah, some kilometres away from the Holy Shrine of Sayyidah Zainab in Damascus. While from Egypt, one of the alumni of the Al Azhar University in Cairo, Zen Muhammad Al Hadi, was indicated to have inclined towards Shiʿism, and turned out to be a Shiʿī prominent in Jakarta.
30. See Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiʿis*, p. 224.
31. The Islamic Cultural Centre in Jakarta (ICC) is one of the major Shiʿī foundations in Indonesia. Located in Warung Buncit, south of Jakarta, it is highly dependent on Iranian authority and responsibility, as well as financial resources. The Islamic centre has functioned, among others, as a coordinating body in the celebration of Islamic festivals. It also plays a crucial role between local Shiʿī institutions and their Iranian counterparts.
32. 'Ijabi Dideklarasikan di Bandung', *Kompas* daily newspaper (4 July 2000), available online at: http://www.kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0007/04/daerah/ijab20.htm+ijabiandhl=enandct=clnkandcd=69andgl=au (accessed January 2009).
33. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallāh was born in Iraq in 1935 and studied in Najaf under various renowned '*ulamā*', including the Grand Ayatollah Khoei and Muḥsin al-Ḥakim. He moved to Lebanon in 1966, and was alleged to have been the spiritual leader of Hizbullah (*hizb Allah*, party of God). Several studies of his ideals and role in Lebanon have been conducted. His website in Arabic, English and French is Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallāh, *Bayynat*, available online at: http://www.bayynat.org.lb (accessed 5 June 2010), and contains his *fatwa* and thoughts. Faḍlallāh has refuted the concept of *velāyat-e faqīh*, arguing that 'no Shia religious leader, not even Khomeini [...] has a monopoly on the truth'. In a 2009 interview, Faḍlallāh said that he did not believe the *velāyat-e faqīh* has a role in modern Lebanon. See Robert L. Pollock, 'A Dialogue with Lebanon's Ayatollah', *Wall Street Journal*, available online at: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123698785743625933.html (accessed 5 June 2010).
34. *Mardja-i Taklid* or *Marjaiyyat*, which literally means the 'source of emulation', is one of the fundamental doctrines in contemporary Shiʿism. This is the highest religious authority to make legal decisions in both religious and political matters. See Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, *Religious Authority in Shiʿite Islam: From the Office of Mufti to the Institution of Marja* (Kuala Lumpur, 1996).
35. Rakhmat in an interview with the writer in July 2009.
36. 'Mumpung Gus Dur Jadi Presiden', *Gatra Magazine* (10 July 2000), available online at: http://www.gatra.com/cari.php?cari=ijabiandlingkup=all (accessed 2 January 2009).
37. Zainal Abidin EP, 'IJABI Peringati Setahun Tsunami Aceh', *Majemuk Magazine*, 17 (Nov.-Dec. 2005), p. 23.
38. 'Kemarahan Di Kedubes Denmark', *Rakyat Merdeka* (7 February 2006), available online at: http://www.rakyatmerdeka.co.id/foto/hal/672/view/177 (accessed 11 August 2010).
39. 'Djalaludin Rahmat Dalam Bingkai Syiah', *Media Informasi Umat, Ditjen Bimas Islam, Departement Agama*, available online at: http://www.bimasislam.depag.go.id/index.php?

option=com_contentandview=articleandid=1396andcatid=1:beritaandItemid=50 (accessed 1 August 2010).

40. *velāyat-e faqih*, as a doctrine, was introduced in the 1970s by Imam Khomeini, to mean literally 'custodianship of the Islamic jurist'. According to the doctrine, clerics must rule the state. A religious authority is higher than that of its political rulers. However, this doctrine is still controversial among high-ranking Shi'ī clerics. See Laurence Louer, *The Transnational Shia Politics, Religious and Political Networks in the Gulf* (New York, 2008), pp. 6, 97.
41. The terms IJABI and non-IJABI were introduced by Rakhmat in an interview with the local media. Some Qum alumni prefer to use the terms Qummiyyin and non-Qummiyyin.
42. Ali, *Alumni Hawza*, pp. 398–406.
43. Hasan Dalil is not an alumnus of Hawza Ilmilyah in Qum, but he has supported the role and ideology of the Qum Alumni. He finished his undergraduate programme at the University of King Saud, Saudi Arabia.
44. For example, Abdurrahman Bima, who was elected to be a member of the House of Representatives (DPR) from the Democratic Party in 2009.
45. Unmarked uniform, according to Labib, is a term used to describe that many *ustadh* have been joining in a wide range of organisations and institutions in Indonesia without revealing their school of thought, Shi'ism.
46. When appointed Minister of Religious Affairs at the end of Suharto's presidency in early 1998, Professor Quraish Shihab had once been accused of being a Shi'ī. However, he strongly denied the accusation. See Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is*, pp. 276–7.
47. During a recent interview, Chairman of NU Hasyim Muzadi and Chairman of Muhammadiyah Din Syamsuddin revealed and shared this view. Even Chairman of MUI Fatwa Committee Dr Anwar Ibrahim shared the same view.
48. In an interview with the writer in July 2009, Habib Bagir bin Ahmad Alatas, a Sunnī follower and respected local religious leader of Pekalongan city, Central Java, expressed his concern that the differences in theological doctrines between Shi'ism and Sunnism would potentially trigger social conflict in the region.
49. *Ghulāt* is a term referring to individuals accused of exaggeration (*ghuluw*) in religion. During the early period of Islam, this group had speculated a wide range of different doctrines within the general Shi'ī political and theological orientation. For instance, they denied the demise of 'Alī b. Ṭālib, expecting his return later. See M. G. S. Hodgson, 'Ghulāt (singular, Ghālī)', *EI2*, available online at: http://www.brillonline.nl.virtual.anu.edu.au/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-2517 (accessed 1 August 2010).
50. Mudzakir, Secretary of the Directorate General of Islam's Social Guidance, Ministry of Religious Affairs, in an interview with the writer in August, 2009.
51. Atho Mudzar, Head of the Research and Development Body, Ministry of Religious Affairs, in an interview with the writer in August 2009.
52. Mudzar, interview, ibid.
53. Ahmadie Thaha, Titik timbang sunah syiah di ..., *Tempo Magazine* (19 December 1987), available online at: http://majalah.tempointeraktif.com/id/arsip/1987/12/19/AG/mbm.19871219.AG33117.id.htmlhttp://majalah.tempointeraktif.com/id/arsip/1987/12/19/AG/mbm.19871219.AG33117.id.html (accessed 5 January 2009).
54. Said Agil Siradj kept repeating his point of view on this matter at several events, the most recent being the occasion of the launching of Quraish Shihab's book *Sunnah-Syiah bergandengan tangan! Mungkinkah? Kajian atas Konsep ajaran dan Pemikiran* (Sunnism and Shi'ism

Hand in Hand! Is it Possible? An Analysis of Concept and Thought). His statement was quoted by *Kompas* daily on 13 May 2007.
55. Fox, 'Currents in Contemporary Islam'.
56. Hasyim Muzadi, in an interview with the writer in August, 2009.
57. Din Syamsuddin, in an interview with the writer, August 2009.
58. This school was developed between the eighth and tenth centuries. Although it can be traced back to Wasil b. Ata (d.748 CE) in Basra, theologians Abu al Hudhayl al-'Allaf (d.849 CE) and Bishr b. al-Mu'tamir (d.825 CE) are credited with formalising its theological stance. Mu'tazili thought relies heavily on logic.
59. Syamsuddin, in an interview with the writer, August 2009.

15. ONE BIG FAMILY? DYNAMICS OF INTERACTION AMONG THE: 'LOVERS OF THE *AHL AL-BAYT*' IN MODERN JAVA

1. I am most grateful to the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, for giving me the opportunity and the financial support necessary to pursue this research during my time there as a post-doctoral fellow (2009–11).
2. For more on the emergence of anti-Shi'a attitudes, see Formichi, 'Religious violence, sectarianism, and the politics of religion: Articulations of anti-Shi'a discourses in Indonesia', *Indonesia* 98 (October 2014), pp. 1–28.
3. Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia*, PhD thesis (Leiden University, 2009), pp. 37–46.
4. For more on IJABI and Jalaluddin Rakhmat, see the chapter by Umar Assegaf in this volume.
5. Paper presented at the International Workshop 'Beyond Shi'ism: Alid Piety in Southeast Asia', Asia Research Institute, Singapore, 14–15 January 2010.
6. http://ahlulbaitindonesia.org/index.php/profil/tujuan-.html
7. Shi'ī Islam is undergoing alternating fortunes in Indonesia, and even though in theory its followers are free to express and practise their beliefs, in practice this appears to be dependent on contingent situations. In order to preserve the anonymity of my informants in this piece of research, all personal names have been changed.
8. An early piece of scholarly research on the emergence of Shi'ism in Indonesia is by Syed Farid Alatas, 'The *Ṭarīqat al-'Alawiyyah* and the Emergence of the Shi'i School in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Oriente Moderno*, 2 (1999), pp. 323–39. More recently, Zulkifli has completed his PhD thesis on this topic; see Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shi'is*.
9. L. W. C. van den Berg, *Hadramaut dan Koloni Arab di Nusantara* (Jakarta, 1989), pp. 68–70.
10. Ibn 'Aqil's crypto-Shi'ism and similar trends have been addressed in the first chapter of this volume.
11. The following data was gathered during informal interviews with senior teachers at Yayasan Pesantren Islam (YAPI), Bangil, 22–23 December 2009.
12. Data on the Shi'ī community in Bondowoso were collected during informal interviews at Yayasan al-Sadiq and Pesantren al-Wafa, Bondowoso, 5–6 May 2010.
13. Half of the YAPI *ustadh*s have studied abroad: some of the male teachers were trained in Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, Damascus in Syria, Lucknow in India, and only a small portion in Qum, including the only *ustadha*.
14. The histories of the *wali songo* are elaborate and conflicting, them being mythico-historical

figures; one of the most contested issues is the matter of how they arrived to Southeast Asia, with Yemen, Iraq and Persia featuring as possible 'birth-places'.

15. On this connection see also Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, *Kafilah Budaya: Pengaruh Persia Terhadap Kebudayaan Indonesia* (Jakarta, 2006). This is a partial translation and publication of the author's doctoral thesis defended at the University of Tehran in 2006.
16. Personal communication, ʿArif, Yogyakarta, 18 December 2009.
17. I was unable to locate the reference Herman was referring to; however, this dynamic has also been highlighted by van Bruinessen in 'Sharīʿa court, tarekat and pesantren: religious institutions in the sultanate of Banten', *Archipel*, 50 (1995), pp. 165–200.
18. Interviews with Herman Sinung Janutama, Yogyakarta, 16 December 2009 and 3 March 2010.
19. For a discussion on the social role played by *silsila* in the Indonesian context, see Daniel Birchok's contribution to this volume.
20. Van Bruinessen has highlighted the centrality of this figure as a link between the Prophet Muḥammad and the *wali songo*. See M. van Bruinessen, 'Najmuddin al-Kubra, Jumadil Kubra and Jamaluddin al-Akbar: Traces of Kubrawiyya Influence in Early Indonesian Islam', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 150 (1994), pp. 305–29.
21. Personal communication, ʿArif, Yogyakarta, 18 December 2009.
22. To this could be added that, as mentioned in the introduction to this volume, the 1549 Arabic foundation inscription of the mosque of Kudus, Central Java, records that the founder of the mosque had taken on the name of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.
23. Informal interview with Herman Sinung Janutama, Yogyakarta, 16 December 2009 and 3 March 2010.
24. Herman Sinung Janutama, *Pisowanan Alit* (Yogyakarta, 2009), pp. 65–7.
25. See also Wendy Mukherjee's chapter in this volume.
26. Informal interview with Herman Sinung Janutama, Yogyakarta, 16 December 2009.
27. Personal communication with a senior Hadrami Shiʿi, Solo, 26 November 2009.
28. Pandji Islam, 'Seroean jang penting', *Pandji Islam*, 15, 25 May 1936, pp. 323–4.
29. Informal Interview with Herman Sinung Janutama, Yogyakarta, 3 March 2010; personal observation of *Maulid Nabi* celebrations, Yogyakarta, 25–8 February 2010.
30. *Dokumentasi Opera Bubur Sura, Dalang Wayang Suket Slamet Gundono*, Cirebon, 2 January 2010 (video CD produced by the *Forum Komunicasi Muslimin*, Cirebon, and bought at the Islamic Cultural Centre, Jakarta).
31. Informal interview with Herman Sinung Janutama, Yogyakarta, 16 December 2009.
32. Baroroh Baried, 'Le Shiʿisme en Indonesie', *Archipel*, 15 (1978), pp. 65–85; see p. 76.
33. Smith Alhadar, 'Sejarah dan Tradisi Syi'ah Ternate', *al-Huda*, 1 (2000), p. 99.
34. Gilbert Hamonic, 'La Fête du Grand Maulid à Cikoang, Regard sur une *Tarekat* dite "Shiʿite" en Pays Makassar', *Archipel*, 29 (1985), pp. 175–89; see p. 186.
35. Afandi Ghazali and Julian Millie, *The People's Religion: The Sermons of A. F. Ghazali* (Bandung, 2008), pp. 48–75.
36. 'Syia, Kalau-kalau Datang', *Tempo* (17 March 1984). For other aspects of the impact of the Iranian revolution on the Shiʿī community in Indonesia, see the contribution of Umar Assegaf in this volume.
37. The following section is based on informal interviews conducted with Ustadh Sayyid Ahmad Baragbah's family, the founder of al-Wahda in Solo, and the two former IJABI cadres, in December 2009.
38. The details above were gathered during informal meetings with senior teachers and several

members of the Baragbah family during my stay at Pesantren al-Hadi, Pekalongan, 20–21 and 25–26 December 2009.

39. Personal communication, al-Hadi, Pekalongan, 21–22 December 2009; informal interview, Yogyakarta, talking about IJABI, on 28 November 2009.
40. Informal interview with a senior teacher of al-Hadi, Pekalongan, 21 December 2009.
41. See the contribution to this volume by Umar Assegaf.
42. Informal interview, Solo, 26 November 2009.
43. *Usroh* literally means 'family', but in the *Ikhwānul Muslimīn* derived language it came to represent a small community living according to Qur'anic principles.
44. On the literature spreading at ITB see Hilman Latief, 'The Identity of Shi'a Sympathizers in Contemporary Indonesia', *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 2 (2009), pp. 300–35.
45. Informal interview, Yogyakarta, 1 December 2009.
46. Informal interview with Jalaluddin Rahmat, Bandung, 27 May 2008.
47. Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Dahulukan akhlak di atas fiqih* (Bandung, 2007).
48. Informal interview, Yogyakarta, 28 November 2009.
49. The data provided in this section were gathered during several visits to Rausyan Fikr, throughout 2009 and early 2010.
50. The Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS) was re-named Islamic College (IC) in 2009. The ICAS/IC is a tertiary-education institution offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in Islamic theology, philosophy and mysticism, with international affiliations to the *Jami'atul Musṭafa* in Qum; the latter is also in charge of selecting the director of the Islamic College in Jakarta. To label ICAS/IC a 'Shi'a University' would be a mistake, as ICAS had been first established through the combined efforts of Jalaluddin Rahmat, Nurcholish Madjid, Haidar Bagir and an unnamed Iranian citizen, as a sister institution to Nurcholish Madjid's Paramadina University (since 2002, ICAS/IC degrees have been recognised in Indonesia through Paramadina University. On Paramadina see Carool Kersten, *Cosmopolitans and Heretics* (London–New York, 2011) p. 91) and it is only in the last decade that it has been absorbing large numbers of Qomi graduates and has become a platform for Indonesians interested in Shi'ī philosophy, metaphysics and *fiqh* (*The Islamic College: Academic Guideline* (Jakarta, 2010), pp. 1–6; *The Islamic College Profile* (not dated); personal communication with Deputy of Education, Jakarta, 12 June 2010).
51. Informal interview, Yogyakarta, 28 November 2009.
52. 'Syiah korban "Kriminalisasi Pemikiran" kaum intoleran', http://indonesian.irib.ir/hi/headline2/-/asset_publisher/0JAr/content/id/5571754/pop_up?_101_INSTANCE_0JAr_viewMode=print (accessed 3 September 2014).
53. 'Sultan Yogyakarta Jamin Keamanan Pesantren Rausyan Fikr', PortalKBR, 23 November 2013: http://www.portalkbr.com/nusantara/jawabali/3033130_4262.html (accessed 3 September 2014).
54. These data resulted from a survey I conducted among the members of Rausyan Fikr in 2009–10.
55. Pengajian Ritual Muḥarram, Rausyan Fikr, Yogyakarta, 18 December 2009.
56. Sean O'Neil, 'Muslim Students Being Taught to Despise Unbelievers as Filth', *Times Online* (20 April 2006), available online at: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article707299.ece?token=nullandoffset=0andpage=1 (accessed 26 April 2010).
57. For more details on the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Indonesia, see Formichi, 'Shaping Shi'a identities in contemporary Indonesia between local tradition and foreign orthodoxy', *Die Welt des Islams*, 54 (2014), pp. 212–36.

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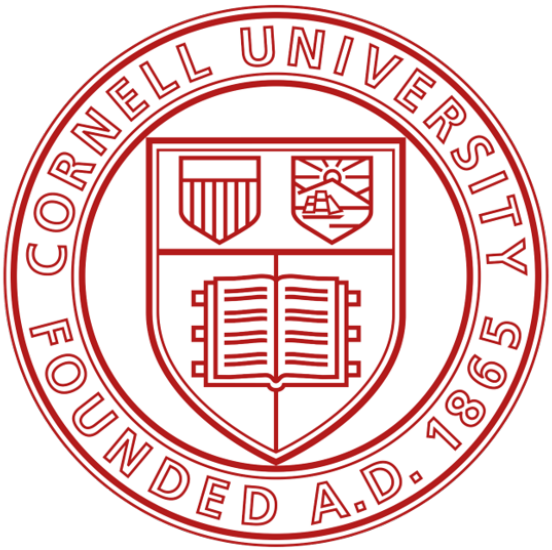

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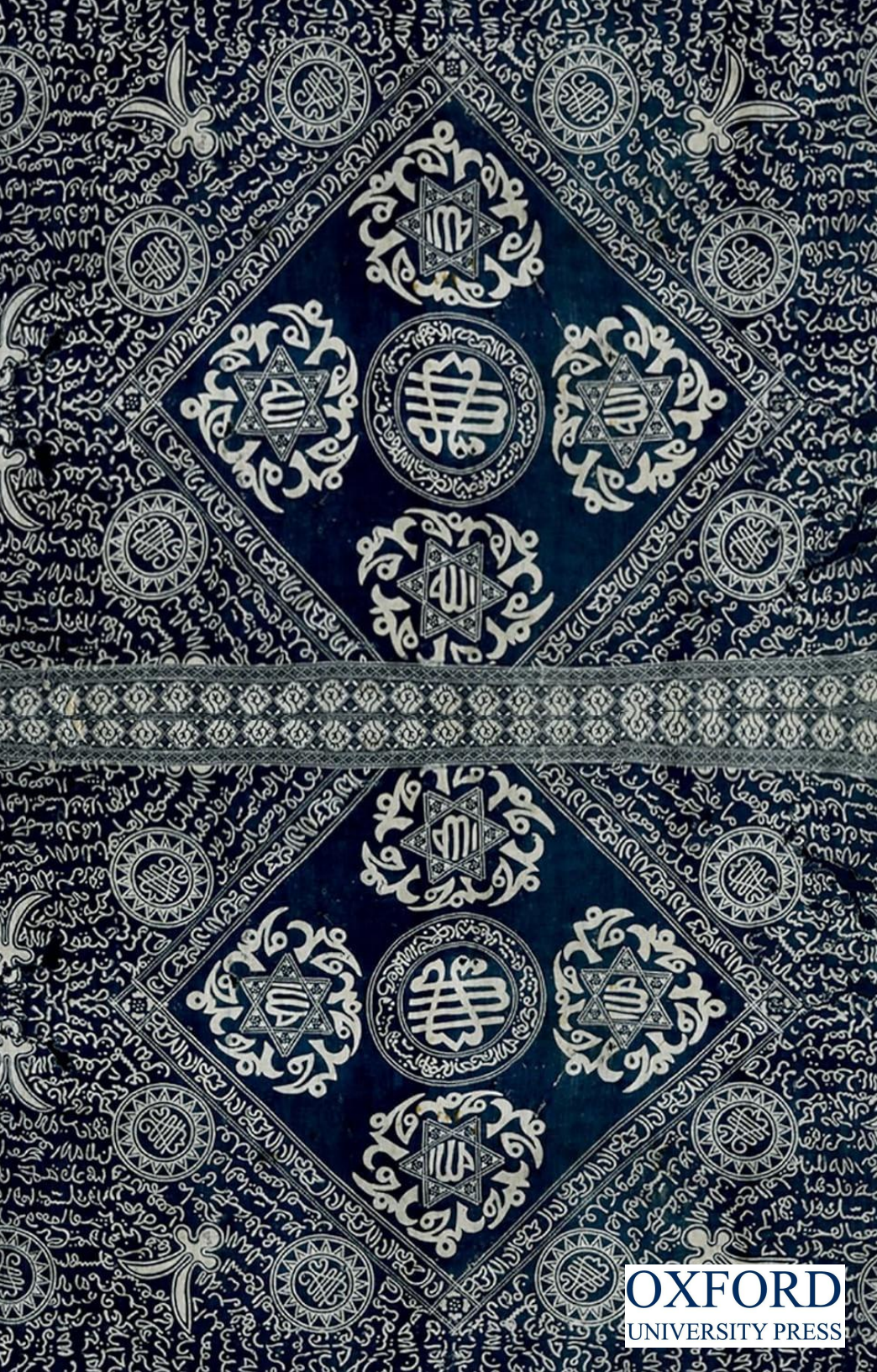
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